

For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

Ex libris
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTAENSIS



For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
LIBRARY

Regulations Regarding Theses and Dissertations

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

BUCKINGHAM AND THE JACOBAN COURT (1614-1618)

by

LESLIE A. FALK



A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

MAY, 1968

THESIS
1968 (F)
62

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance,
a thesis entitled

Buckingham and the Jacobean court (1614-1618)

submitted by Leslie A. Falk

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The early career of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628), is the subject of this thesis. The chronological span covered will be from mid-1614 to the end of 1618. The events of 1619 to 1628, ending with Buckingham's assassination, will be briefly summarized in an Epilogue, but only to relate the earlier period of his life to the later. Only his activities in the domestic sphere will be examined. His impact upon foreign affairs, of virtually no significance before 1618, will not be discussed in the main body of the text.

It will be shown how George Villiers, a young man of undistinguished birth, rose to become the sole favorite of James I of England, entirely because of his ability to attract the monarch. In 1616, two years after his discovery by James, Buckingham was placed in a position of administrative responsibility which was second only to the office of the King itself in power. The nature of that administrative position within the structure of seventeenth century English officialdom will be studied carefully, as will the favorite's exercise of his powers. It will be shown how the favorite built up a powerful following at Court by using his patronage. Before 1618, despite Buckingham's great basic power of patronage, most of the highest offices of state were held by the Howard faction, a group which rivalled Buckingham. Before

that year, the favorite had to be content, for the most part, with giving minor offices and titles to relatives and friends. In 1618, however, he supported a successful purge of the Howards and was then able to create a party of his own which dominated the ranks of the bureaucracy.

It was these early years which saw the basis of the great favorite's power laid. It was his achievements in this period which made him the arbiter of policies and the spectacular figure that he was in the 1620's. Had he not been able to achieve the position of dominance that he built up for himself, such well known things as the journey to Madrid and the expedition to Cadiz might never have occurred. An edifice must begin with a foundation, and the purpose of this work is to examine the basis upon which a magnificent superstructure was built.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSP Dom., 1611-18; 1619-23.....Great Britain, Public
Record Office. Calendar of State
Papers Domestic of the Reign of
James I, 1611-18, 1619-1623.
London, 1858.

CSP Ven., 1615-17; 1617-19..... Great Britain. Public
Record Office. Calendar of State
Papers and Manuscripts related
to English Affairs, existing
in the Archives and Collections
of Venice, and in other Libraries
of Northern Italy, 1615-1617,
1617-1619. London, 1898.

DNB..... Great Britain. Her
Majesty's Stationery Office.
The Dictionary of National
Biography. London, 1906.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter		
I. THE NEW FAVORITE (1592-1616)	11
II. SECOND ONLY TO THE KING (1616-1617)	42
III. THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUCKINGHAM FACTION (1616-1618)	73
IV. THE FALL OF THE HOWARDS AND THE DOMINANCE OF BUCKINGHAM (1618)	107
EPILOGUE	146
WORKS CITED	156

In the preparation of this thesis, I am
deeply indebted to the assistance and encouragement
of Dr. W. J. Jones.

All specific dates will be in Old Style, with the New Year being January 1. The spelling used in quotations was taken directly from the published sources used.

INTRODUCTION

The study of early Stuart England lacks an up-to-date, definitive biography of the first Duke of Buckingham, despite the fact that several treatments do exist. The first biography of the Duke was written by Sir Henry Wotton, a Jacobean gentleman and diplomat.¹ Because Wotton knew Buckingham personally, the work is valuable as a primary source and it is highly readable, but it is far too brief to be of much value to anyone exploring the life of Buckingham in considerable depth. Another readable but sketchy biography, too brief to be of much value in an exhaustive study, was published by George Smeeton in 1819.²

A three volume work by Mrs. Katherine Thompson is the most detailed and most reliable biography of Buckingham.³ However, it was published in 1860, and thus it is obviously "dated", if only because many of the archive catalogues and printed collections now available to students of this period

1

Sir Henry Wotton, "A Short View of the Life and Death of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham", The Harleian Miscellany, ed. W. Oldys, (London, 1747).

2

George Smeeton, Historical and Biographical Texts, (London, 1819). The study of Buckingham is part of this work.

3

Katherine Thompson, The Life and Times of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, (London, 1860).

were nonexistent at that time. Also, as was true of most nineteenth century histories, the treatment, although highly detailed, is very superficial. Very little analysis is offered: Mrs. Thompson devotes far too much space to such topics as Buckingham's gardens and how he took care of his flowers. One striking inadequacy is the failure to discuss the renowned homosexuality in the relationship between Buckingham and King James. The subject is mentioned, but nothing more is said. Mrs. Thompson, of course, was obliged to pay homage to the strict mid-Victorian mores regarding discussion of such a topic, but this omission in itself renders the work unauthoritative to the modern scholar. Nevertheless, the work is the most exhaustive treatment of the Duke's life in existence, and it is highly readable.

Since the appearance of Mrs. Thompson's biography, four biographies of Buckingham have been published. In 1908, a book by Sir Philip Gibbs appeared, which, as the author himself pointed out, cannot be considered¹ definitive. He did not consult primary sources, and appears to have relied very heavily upon S. R. Gardiner's ten volume study of the reigns of the first two Stuarts. The Romance of George Villiers reads very much like an

1

Sir Philip Gibbs, The Romance of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, and some Men and Women of the Stuart Court, (London, 1908).

historical novel, and as such it may be considered good, because it is well written.

In 1935, Miss M. A. Gibbs (not a relative of Sir Philip)¹ published her biography of Buckingham. This work is more academically pretentious than Sir Philip Gibbs' and it is to be strongly criticized. She seems to have ignored primary sources, and her treatment of Buckingham's life lacks proportion. She devoted only thirty-six pages to Buckingham's career between 1614 and 1621, despite the great importance of this period. In these years, Buckingham became established as the powerful royal favorite that he was. She then devoted sixty pages to Buckingham's activities in Madrid in 1623. The journey to Madrid is of great importance and one could devote even more space to it, but sixty pages spent on one year is disproportionate to thirty-six spent on seven years.

In 1939 there appeared Mr. C. R. Cammell's work.² Of all the biographers of Buckingham, Mr. Cammell is unique

1

M. A. Gibbs, Buckingham, (London, 1935).

2

Charles R. Cammel, The Great Duke of Buckingham, (London, 1939).

in that he fell madly in love with Buckingham. The text often becomes sickening to read as the author pours forth flowery praise, all of which, in the case of Buckingham, is very inappropriate. To the vast majority of students of this period, the Duke was unscrupulous as a powerful political figure and incompetent as a military commander, and our increasing knowledge does not suggest otherwise. Cammell's preoccupation with the multitudinous "virtues" of Buckingham prompted him to ignore many important events, developments and other personalities of the time. Far too little, for example, is said about the relationship between the favorite and James. Another striking omission in the work is the author's failure to examine the historical background in any detail, which in itself renders the work valueless. The merits of the biography are to be found in its collection of portraits of the Duke and two chapters dealing with Buckingham's patronage of the arts. Outside of these features, however, The Great Duke of Buckingham cannot be taken seriously by the historian.

Hugh Ross Williamson's treatment, published in 1941,¹ is not a pretentious work. The author pointed out that he

1

Hugh Ross Williamson, George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, (London, 1941).

merely wished to summarize the events of Buckingham's life, in some detail, to provide a guide for the definitive biographer of the future. Perhaps the major fault of Ross Williamson in the work is his failure to footnote his sources, including his quotations, which tends to nullify his attempt to provide a guide for the serious student of Buckingham's career. Two valuable things about the book, however, are its excellent discussion of the historiography on Buckingham and its collection of primary sources in the Appendix. Among the letters appended are all of those printed by T. R. Stephenson in his¹ printed collection of 1831. Only fifty copies of this little volume were published and hence it is often difficult to obtain.

The future writer of a definitive biography of Buckingham will be faced by three major problems. The first is the great lack of source materials on Buckingham's early life (i.e. before he became acquainted with James in 1614) which leaves several important problems unsolved. For example, it is known from Wotton that the Duke's mother was in charge of his upbringing and that she was a driving force behind his career. But in dealing with this topic, all that the historian can do is quote a few sentences from

1

T. R. Stephenson, Letters of the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, Chiefly Addressed to King James, (Edinburgh, 1831).

Wotton. It is possible that detailed studies in the county and legal records will produce more information, but such studies have not been done. A major question about the Duke's psychology also remains unanswered. When he was a mere newcomer to the English Court (1614-15), he was very cordial and polite to everyone. From 1617 onwards, he was extremely arrogant, conceited and egotistic. Was Buckingham putting on an act when he was still rising in royal favor, only to shed his guise when he felt secure in his loftiness? Or, was he sincere in his early politeness and later corrupted by power? If it could be proven that he was acting during the early part of his career, he could be portrayed as one of the most magnificent frauds in history, because he did manage to charm many people at Court during these years. If he were corrupted by power, his career would provide ideal material for reflection upon Lord Acton's classic statement "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." Obviously, an investigation into the nature of his personality before he became a royal favorite might shed some light on this matter. Available sources, however, do not permit such a study.

Lack of material on his early life is one problem. A massive volume of material on his public career (1614-28) may be considered another. Because of the great basic

importance that Buckingham's career possesses, because of the great political power that he wielded, one would literally have to rewrite, in great depth, the entire history of England and much of the history of continental Europe during the early seventeenth century. The definitive biography of Buckingham will probably be very long and it will involve years of intensive research.

Paradoxically, however, the greatest problem which the future biographer will face will be a serious deficiency in one aspect of the favorite's public career itself. Although a great deal of correspondence and other written material has survived, there is one important area which will always remain very nebulous. Much of Buckingham's power rested upon the private influence he enjoyed with the King. Much of this influence was exercised in the form of purely private conversations with the sovereign, which, of course, could not have been recorded. In discussing many of the important events of the period, the historian has good reason to believe that Buckingham's influence was at work behind these events, but he often is completely unable to describe precisely what the favorite was doing. For example, in 1618, the Howard family fell from its powerful position at Court. It is known that Buckingham desired the ruin of this great family because it rivalled

him at Court, but it is impossible to describe exactly what he was doing at all times, behind the scenes, to effect the family's destruction. Such is the major problem in biographing a royal favorite who exercised great political power. He was a close friend of both James I and Charles I and he was allowed to exercise political power basically because he was a private friend of the two sovereigns. Had he at least been away from the Court for much longer periods than he actually was, a considerable number of written words might have been exchanged between King and favorite. The survival of this correspondence would make it possible to document the nature of his influence with a reasonable amount of precision. But James always wanted his favorite close at hand, or at least not too far distant, and Charles was little different.¹ In fact the only times that Buckingham was very far away for very long were on the journey to Madrid in 1623, the embassy to Paris in 1625, and his military expedition to La Rochelle in 1627. On each occasion, Buckingham was gone for several months and a considerable amount of correspondence between King and

1

Often, James would go hunting in the country and Buckingham would remain in London, for a few days at a time. Such a parting, however, hardly would necessitate the exchange of a great deal of correspondence.

favorite was exchanged, much of which has survived.¹
Outside of the utilization of this material, however,
the author of the definitive biography will be obliged
to use a great deal of guesswork in probing behind the
scenes.

Despite the great problems which it will involve,
a definitive biographical treatment of the first Duke
of Buckingham will be of great value. Buckingham was
the dominant character in a colorful era of English
history, and because of his great basic importance,
a biography of Buckingham will be invaluable to students of
almost every aspect of Stuart historical studies: intellectual
history perhaps being a notable exception.

In the preparation of this thesis, which deals with
only a part of Buckingham's career, only published sources
were used. A number of secondary works were of great
value, chiefly Menna Prestwich's recent biography of
Lionel Cranfield, G.E. Aylmer's The King's Servants, and
D. H. Willson's King James VI and I. It was, of course,
physically impossible to ransack the massive amounts of

¹
The letters exchanged to and from Madrid in 1623 are
preserved in Volume 6897 of the Harleian Manuscripts in
the British Museum. Other surviving letters may be
found in the uncalendared State Papers Foreign in the
Public Record Office and scattered in other collections.
None of these materials were utilized in the preparation
of this thesis, as they pertain to events beyond the scope
of the work.

unpublished primary sources in the British Museum, the Public Record Office, or in other British libraries. Chief among the published primary sources used were the Calendar of State Papers Domestic and the Calendar of State Papers Venetian.¹ Numerous other printed collections, such as Thomas Birch's Court and Times of James the First, and Nichol's Progresses were also invaluable. Material existent in the volumes of The Camden Society, The Royal Historical Society, Historical Manuscripts Commission, and other society publications, did not prove to be of much assistance to the topic of the thesis, although a few references to things in these collections are made. The fact that the Patent Rolls for the reign of James I are uncalendared created perhaps the most serious specific deficiency in the preparation of the thesis. A considerable amount of useful detail regarding appointments and conferments² which Buckingham controlled was unavailable.

1

The Calendar of State Papers Domestic, prepared, for the most part, by scholarly writers of the last century, contains brief summaries of letters, warrants, etc., preserved in the Public Record Office of London. As such, the Calendar is a reasonable, but not always reliable summary of the papers. It is possible for an editor to omit a detail which may be of great value in a particular study.

2

It may be added, here, that the State Papers Foreign are not only uncalendared, but exist in a state of confusion at present. This will be another major problem in the preparation of a comprehensive biography of Buckingham.

CHAPTER I

THE NEW FAVORITE

(1592-1616)

George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, was¹ born on August 28, 1592, at Brooksby, Leicestershire. His father, Sir George Villiers, was of an old Leicestershire family. Claiming Norman descent, the Villiers had been seated in Nottinghamshire before settling in Leicestershire in the thirteenth century, and had possessed a few famous members in Norman and Plantagenet² times. Nothing more is known about the medieval history of the family, but it has been established that they purchased former monastic lands during the reign of³ Henry VIII. Sir George himself received a knighthood

¹

He will be referred to as Villiers until mention is made of his creation as Earl of Buckingham in 1617 (see 74, below).

²

Sir Henry Wotton, "A Short View of the Life and Death of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham", The Harleian Miscellany, ed. W. Oldys, (London, 1747), VIII, 588; Katherine Thompson, The Life and Times of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, (London, 1861), I, 11 ff. Mrs. Thompson mentions in particular one Philip de Villiers, Grand Master of Rhodes during the early twelfth century, and one Sir Alexander Villiers, who apparently possessed some fame during the reign of Edward I.

³

J. H. Plumb, "Political History, 1530-1885", The Victoria County History of Leicestershire, ed. W. G. Hoskins, (London, 1954), II, 210.

and the office of sheriff in 1591.¹

The favorite's mother was the beautiful Mary Villiers, daughter of Sir Anthony Beaumont of Coleorton, Leicestershire, and the second wife of Sir George, who had first been married to Elizabeth, daughter of William Sanders of Harington, Northamptonshire.² By the first marriage, Sir George had two sons and three daughters: William, Edward, Elizabeth, Anne and Frances. By Mary, he had four children: George, the eldest, John, Christopher and Susan. Along with Mary, most of the children, including some of those of the first marriage, were to profit from George's patronage when he had become the royal favorite.

In 1605, when George was thirteen, his father died, and left most of his estate to the children of his first

¹ Thompson, I, 13.

² There are two stories concerning Mary's background. One is that she had been a waiting gentlewoman at the Beaumont residence, the other that she had been a kitchen-maid at Brooksby. In both tales, Sir George became carried away with her great beauty and married her, despite her lowly station. There is no doubt, however, that she was the daughter of Sir Anthony Beaumont and hence came from a gentry family. The two stories probably were propagated and perhaps originated by Buckingham's enemies after his assassination in 1628. Ibid., 12, ff. The Beaumonts also possessed some fame in local politics. Plumb, II, 208 ff.

marriage, all of whom were of age by that time. He left only Goadby, one of his four manors, and a small annuity¹ to Mary and the children he had by her. Mary remarried the following year, but her husband, Sir William Raynor of Orton-Longueville in Huntingdonshire, died four months after the marriage. She then married Sir Thomas Compton, a Leicestershire gentleman who had a great reputation for indolence and cowardice, but who could adequately sustain² Mary and her four children. The important fact about Compton is that he showed little interest in the upbringing of his adopted children. After the death of Sir George Villiers, it was Mary who raised George and his three siblings. It was the mother, then, who became the most important influence in the lives of the children, and her influence persisted long after George and the others came of age.

Mary was a very ambitious mother. It is evident that she desired all of her sons to become courtiers, and she probably dreamed of even loftier goals for George, who was by far the handsomest of her sons. King James' fondness for attractive young men was already widely known

1

Thompson, I, 18.

2

This story of Compton is reliable, and did not originate as a slur on the reputation of the Villiers family. Ibid., 19. Mary is usually referred to as Lady Compton in reference to the period before 1618. In 1618, she was created Countess of Buckingham.

when George was in his teens, and even at this time Mary may have hoped that her attractive son could become a royal favorite, provided that he receive the proper grooming for a courtier's life. In fact, none of the children had much academic ability, and Mary did not encourage them to be serious students. Instead, she trained all of them in the arts becoming to courtiers. It seems that George excelled his brothers in proficiency at his mother's lessons. Sir Henry Wotton, the first biographer of Buckingham, summarized the favorite's upbringing:

. . .his beautiful and provident mother. . . had him in especial care, so he was first, as we might say, domestic favorite; but finding him, as it should seem by nature, little studious and contemplative, she chose rather to endue him with conversative qualities and ornaments of youth, as dancing, fencing and the like; not, without perchance, even then, though far off, at a courtier's life: to which lessons he had such a dextrous proclivity, as his teachers were fain to restrain his forwardness, to the end that his brothers, who were under the same training, might have pace with him.¹

In 1610, when he was eighteen, George Villiers went to France "where he might improve himself well in the language. . ."² He returned to England in 1613, at the age of twenty-one, and spent one year with his mother. Then he went to London to become the suitor to Sir Roger Aston's daughter, hoping by this connection to attach

1

Wotton, Short View, 588. Wotton is reliable on Villiers' upbringing. All facts known about Mary indicate that she was ambitious and very influential with her children. It is also known that Villiers possessed great skill at dancing, etc.

2

Ibid.

himself to the Court.¹ However, he decided to try a quicker way to success, and he soon abandoned his courtship of Aston's daughter. In the summer of 1614, James was on Progress through the Midlands, and it seems that Villiers was following the Court, hoping to catch the attention of James. Under circumstances which are not clearly known, he did catch the eye of the King, probably² in August of that year. James was immediately attracted to him. The spectacular career of George Villiers began at this point.

As a royal favorite, the whole basis of Villiers' career was his close relationship with King James and, later, with Charles. In 1614, when his career began, he possessed no merits other than his ability to attract James. He came from a family which had little distinction in London and no good connections with the Court. He was too poor to purchase either title or office. In discussing Villiers' rise to power, it is necessary to analyze the all-important relationship between himself and the King, and here there is a serious problem. One is forced to deal solely with personalities, with what might be called

¹ Aston was a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. He probably was a previous acquaintance of the Villiers family but he has no significance in Villiers' career other than in this brief courtship.

² Thompson, I, 41-42. The race-track at Linton and Sir Walter Mildmay's mansion at Apthorpe, Leicestershire, have both been suggested as the place of the meeting. The exact date is unknown.

a "psychological" problem in history. To analyze the personalities and the personal relationships of men who lived over three centuries ago is not easy. There is insufficient information to describe early Stuart royal favoritism in precise detail. However, a study of available sources indicates that there were probably three basic elements in the relationship between James and Villiers. One factor was James' notorious homosexuality. The second was a noticeable element of nonsexual, intimate friendship. The third was James' desire to have an intimate, trustworthy friend deal with much of the King's own duties in government.

It is difficult to decide which of these three elements was generally the most important. It would be difficult, and perhaps erroneous, even to suggest that the homosexual element was the only or the most important one. However, not all three factors appeared instantly at the time of Villiers' discovery by James. Because Villiers' physical appearance would have been the most obvious attraction for James at the time of the meeting, the homosexual element would have been the first to appear. Close friendship, the second element, would have developed after the meeting, and it was 1616 before Villiers was given any authority in matters of government. By 1616, one might say that the relationship was mature, and that all three factors were at work.

James definitely did have strong homosexual tendencies, despite the fact that it is impossible to prove that he ever engaged in sexual intercourse with any of his favorites.¹ An important fact is that James' homosexuality had a long history before the discovery of Villiers. Even before his accession to the English throne in 1603, he had several physically attractive favorites. In the early 1580's, when he was but in his early teens, James was attracted to his second cousin, Esme Stuart, Duke of Lennox. Later, he was endeared to George Gordon, Earl of Huntly, and Francis Stewart Hepburn, fifth Earl of Bothwell.² In England, his great favorite before the rise of Villiers was Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. Thus, James' homosexuality must have been well known long before his discovery of Villiers in 1614. Any attractive young man might hope to become a royal favorite by presenting himself to the King. In the summer of 1614, Villiers was following the Court, hoping for recognition. Surely, the beginning of the favorite's career was not a complete accident.

1

David H. Willson, King James VI and I, (London, 1963), 337; G. E. Aylmer, The Struggle for the Constitution, (London, 1965), 31. Willson, who has written the best existent biography of James, and Aylmer, whose research in this period of the century has earned him great distinction, may both be cited as authorities on this point.

2

Willson, 36. These Scottish favorites were of no importance in Villiers' career and will not be mentioned subsequently.

George Villiers was esteemed one of the most attractive men of his age. To Bishop Godfrey Goodman, a contemporary¹ observer, Villiers was "the handsomest man of England." The antiquarian and diarist, Sir Simonds D'Ewes, stated: "I saw everything in him full of delicacy and handsome features, yea, his hands and face seemed to me especially effeminate and curious."² He was tall, broad-shouldered, well-proportioned, and he had great physical vigor and strength. His face was very finely formed, giving him an element of feminine attractiveness. He had large, deep blue eyes, dark chestnut hair and perfectly unblemished³ skin. He impressed everybody with his physical charms, and James was not the only person to be sexually attracted to him. William Laud, the famous Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of Charles I and chaplain to the favorite for several years, confessed in his diary that he had⁴ once dreamed of taking Villiers to bed with him.

1

Godfrey Goodman, The Court of James I, ed. J. S. Brewster, (London, 1839), I, 225.

2

Sir Simonds D'Ewes, Autobiography of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, ed. J. O. Halliwell, (London, 1854), I, 166.

3

Willson, 384-5.

4

W. Lamont, Marginal Prynne, (London, 1963), 4.

After the meeting in the summer of 1614, George Villiers was asked by the King to attend the Court constantly, and the new favorite soon attracted the interest of several influential people. There were at this time three principal elements at Court: two opposing factions and the royal favorite who preceded Villiers in power, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. It was in a world of factional warfare that the first stage of Villiers' rise to power was enacted.

Possession of office and influence meant wealth for the holders, and competition between groups of people for office was one of the major causes of Court factionalism at this time.¹ There was, however, another reason for factional division in the Jacobean Court in 1614. In that year, James and the government of Spain were discussing a possible marriage alliance between Spain and England. This project of foreign policy had become the great hope of one of the two

1

See chs. III and IV below for a discussion of the rise of Villiers' faction and the Howard preponderance at Court.

factions, which is usually called the Howard or "Catholic"¹ party. This party had the interests of the Catholic subjects at heart, that is, it hoped for the abolition of the Elizabethan penal laws, and it believed that Spain would insist upon such a liberation as one of the terms of a marriage treaty.² This faction was led by the powerful Howard family, which had a considerable number of Catholic

1

After the Peace of London (1604), Spain wished to maintain peaceful relations with England for two main reasons. First, she feared that a future naval war with England would have a disastrous effect upon her commerce. Secondly, she wished to free the English Catholics from the penal laws by utilizing peaceful diplomacy. The liberation of Catholics living within Protestant states was an important part of Spanish foreign policy, and Spain hoped that the English Catholics, once freed from the restrictions of the penal laws, could help to re-convert the Kingdom to Catholicism. The Spanish Habsburgs had abandoned the idea of subduing and re-converting England by conquest late in the sixteenth century (conquest was the policy before, as was evident in the sailing of the Armada in 1588), and adopted peaceful diplomacy as the means to the end.

James wished to maintain peace with Spain because he personally was dedicated to peace and he felt that the financial situation of the English Crown rendered a future war unfeasible. Also, he was attracted to the Spanish proposals regarding a dowry.

In 1613, Spain sent the able ambassador, Don Diego de Sarmiento y Acuña (later the Count of Gondomar) to England. From that time until 1623, with only two interruptions (1618 to 1621 and late 1622), the two Kingdoms negotiated, fruitlessly, for a marriage alliance. At the English Court, the division between "Protestants" and "Catholics" did not occur until the beginning of the negotiations in 1613. The first battle between the two factions was fought in the Addled Parliament of 1614. Thomas L. Moir, The Addled Parliament of 1614, (Oxford, 1958), passim.

2

By law, a Catholic recusant could not travel more than five miles from his residence, and was threatened with imprisonment and fine for not attending the established Church.

members. The family was influential at Court, and several Howards and close associates of the family held high offices. Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, was Lord Treasurer; Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, was the Lord High Admiral; Lord Knollys, married to Suffolk's¹ daughter, was Master of the Wards.

Opposed to the Catholic party was a "Protestant" party, led principally by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury.²

1

Only the Howards who held high office have been mentioned above; see IV, below, for a discussion of lesser office-holders in the faction.

Suffolk, who had risen as a courtier and soldier during the reign of Elizabeth, was created Lord Treasurer in 1614. Nottingham, as the commander of the fleet against the Armada in 1588, had earned considerable fame during Elizabethan times and had been retained in high favor by James. Knollys, once a friend of Sir Philip Sidney, had married Elizabeth, Suffolk's daughter, in 1605, and was created Master of the Wards in 1614. Suffolk, Nottingham and Knollys were not Catholics, but they gave support to the religious aspirations of other members of faction.

The key figure in the party was Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, an unscrupulous but brilliant Roman Catholic courtier (he kept his religious beliefs as secret as possible). Having held the offices of Lord Privy Seal and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and having possessed great influence with James, he did much to advance the fortunes of the party. He died early in 1614, before the rise of Villiers, and thus is not listed above.

The position of the faction in the ranks of high office was further strengthened by the elevation of Sir Thomas Lake to the Secretaryship in 1616. Mention should also be made of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, who, although not an office-holder, was a member of the Privy Council.

2

The party also included Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, Sir Ralph Winwood, Francis Bacon, Sir Edward Coke and others.

The Protestant faction represented the opinions of the majority of Englishmen toward forming a marriage alliance with Spain and granting liberty to the Catholics. Expressing a point of view which was also quite strong in Elizabethan times, the Protestant party feared that the Catholics of England were largely a subversive element, allied with the Papacy and with Spain. Thus, as the Protestant faction reasoned, the Catholics constituted a potential threat to both the Protestant religion and the political independence¹ of England.

Although far weaker than the Protestant faction in terms of popular support, the Howards, at this time, were more powerful at Court. First of all, they held more important offices in the government than did their opponents. Secondly, Sarmiento y Acuña, the Spanish ambassador, had become a close friend of James, and was exerting a powerful influence on the King's mind. Thirdly,

1

This was not a realistic fear. Most of the Catholic recusants were Catholics in the sense that they adhered to Catholic spiritual doctrines only. They believed the Pope to be supreme in doctrinal matters, but they did not believe him to be the political suzerain of Europe. They were not allied to the Spanish Crown. They sincerely professed true political loyalty to the King of England.

There was a more extreme element, consisting of Jesuits and people with Jesuit inspiration. These people wished to restore Papal supremacy in England and they felt that the assassination or deposition of a Protestant ruler was justifiable.

James feared the latter, extreme element (eg. the Gunpowder Plot of 1605) but, unlike many Englishmen, he realized that most of the English Catholics were not seditious. Thus, the penal laws were not rigidly enforced during much of his reign.

the Howards had married one of their members, Frances, a daughter of Suffolk, to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, the royal favorite. Somerset, allied also to the interests of the Howards by this marriage, was devoting all of his great influence with James to the advancement of Howard desires.

Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, was a Scot who had once served as a running foot-page to the royal household in Scotland, when James ruled Scotland only.¹ English fashion, however, called for footmen and not running pages, and in 1603, when James was crowned in England, Carr had been dismissed. After spending some time in France, Carr returned to England in 1607 and became an attendant at a tilting-match, where he fell from his horse and broke his arm. James witnessed the accident, and ordered that the young Scot should receive prompt medical attention. Through the course of Carr's recovery, James visited the handsome youth, and during these visits the relationship developed which led to Carr's fortunes as a royal favorite. In 1608, he was knighted. In 1611, he was made Viscount Rochester, and became the first Scot to hold a seat in the English House of Lords.² In 1612, upon the death of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury and Secretary of State,

1

A running foot-page had the inglorious task of running beside a coach and performing tasks at the occupants' bidding. It is a wonder that James was not attracted to Carr at this time.

2

DNB, III, 1081.

Carr was made a Secretary of State and also a kind of "private secretary" to James, with great administrative powers.¹ In 1613, he was made Earl of Somerset. In 1614, shortly before the appearance of Villiers, he was made Lord Privy Seal, and Lord Chamberlain later in the same year.² The most important event in Carr's career, however, was his marriage to Frances, née Howard, which occurred late in 1613. The match, from the point of view of the Howards, was a brilliant one, but it was marred by a great tragedy, which eventually ruined Carr's career. This was the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.

Sir Thomas Overbury, a prominent poet and courtier of the time, had befriended Carr early in the favorite's rise to power, because he reasoned that a close relationship with a royal favorite would be a good means of furthering his own fortunes at Court. In 1609, however, Carr had fallen in love with Frances, and a troublesome situation developed. Frances, by 1609, had been unhappily married³ for several years to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex,

1

See 55, 58ff., below. The administrative position of Carr was very similar to the one Villiers later received.

2

He replaced Northampton as Lord Privy Seal.

3

This was the son of the famous Earl who led the revolt of 1601. Essex had been ill-matched to Frances. She, being vivacious and headstrong, could not be happy with the somewhat sober and dull young Earl.

but that did not prevent the vain and unscrupulous beauty from carrying on a romance with Carr for some time. Finally, in 1611, she decided to divorce Essex and marry Carr. The crafty Earl of Northampton, Frances' uncle, greeted this decision with enthusiasm, because a marriage between a Howard girl and the royal favorite would provide an excellent means of exerting even more influence upon James.

Overbury, however, became alarmed, because he knew that Northampton would want Frances to displace completely his own influence with Carr, in order to have a free hand in using Carr as a tool. He interfered in the famous Essex divorce proceedings when they began¹ in 1612, and enraged both James and the favorite. To remove Overbury's interference, James, acting on the suggestion of both Carr and Northampton, ordered Overbury to go abroad on an embassy. When Overbury refused, the furious monarch had him placed in the Tower. Frances, not content with the mere imprisonment of her enemy, had² Overbury poisoned in 1613. Shortly after the poet's death,

1

James favored the Essex divorce partly because he wished to please his favorite and partly because he liked Frances and sympathized with her desire for a divorce. Because she and Essex had been married in their teens, James reasoned that the match had been made when both partners were too young. It may be added that James probably was jealous of Overbury's friendship with Carr.

2

The best account of the Overbury murder and the subsequent trials is William McElwee, The Murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, (London, 1952).

the divorce case ended in Frances' favor, and she and Somerset were married in December. In 1614, the Earl of Somerset enjoyed the height of his career. But beneath the surface of great favor, wealth and power which had been heaped upon him and his Countess was the terrible murder, which remained secret for almost two years after it had occurred.

When Villiers appeared in the summer of 1614, the Protestant faction felt that it had been dealt a fresh and stronger hand. Perhaps Villiers could act as a counterpoise to Somerset. Pembroke and Archbishop Abbot resolved to do everything they could to advance Villiers. It is very interesting to note that Somerset himself showed no opposition to Villiers for some time after the new favorite appeared at Court. He felt confident of his new position with James and he may have wished to alleviate his own unpopularity. As a Scot, Carr was disliked in England, and he may have felt that allowing some favoritism to an English youth might appease those who disapproved of his own nationality. Accordingly, Sir Thomas Lake, an associate of the Howards, purchased the office of Cupbearer for the newcomer.

1

S. R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-1642, (London, 1901-09), II, 318.

It seems that James, however, believed that he could be equally affectionate to both Somerset and Villiers, because it is evident that he wanted his new delight to have more than the lowly office of Cupbearer. Late in 1614, he decided to give Villiers a post in the Bedchamber, where he would be in a position involving greater intimacy with the royal person. At this point, Somerset's jealousy was aroused, and he influenced James to give the post to one of his own nephews.¹ Allowable as a royal diversion, Villiers could not be tolerated by Somerset as a permanent rival which was what the Earl was believing Villiers could become. Late in 1614, Villiers fortunes seemed to be at a standstill.²

As it was, Villiers did not gain any positions for several months after receiving the post of Cupbearer, but James had no intention of relinquishing him and he was still ever present at Court. Early in 1615, Somerset began to fret, and he said things to James which were taken as insults.³ Very angry, James sent Somerset a very strong letter. He assured the Earl that he had no danger

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 260.

² Ibid.

³ Although the rebuff Somerset received from James has survived, the exact things which the favorite said to the King are unknown.

of being displaced by Villiers, but he issued a sharp warning:

. . . you have, in many of your mad fits, done what you mean not so much to hold me by love as by awe, and that you have me so far in your reverence as that I dare not offend you or resist your appetites. . . Remember that all of your being, except your being and soul, is from me. I told you. . . you might lead me by the heart but not by the nose. . . If ever I find that you think to retain me by one sparkle of fear, all the violence of my love will in that instant be changed into as violent a hatred.¹

It was clear that Somerset had made a terrible mistake. He had forgotten that as a royal favorite his whole career rested upon maintaining a close relationship with the King. James had wished to extend favor to Villiers. Somerset had opposed this and insulted the King. Although James assured his favorite that Villiers would not supplant him, it is easy to judge from the tone of the letter that Somerset lost some favor with the King early in 1615.

Later in the same year, Archbishop Abbot decided to take advantage of another mistake made by Somerset. In March, the Earl presided over festivities honoring the Earl of Suffolk, who had just been made Chancellor of Cambridge University, and he failed to invite the Queen, generally known as Anne of Denmark, to a masque.

¹

J. O. Halliwell, ed., Letters of the Kings of England, (London, 1846), II, 126-127.

Anne was deeply insulted, and Abbot decided that she would be in the proper humor to do Somerset a bad turn.¹ The Archbishop had also recalled that it was a peculiar custom of James to have Anne introduce a new favorite who wished to be advanced in the royal favor "that if the Queen afterwards, being ill-treated, should complain of this dear one, he might make his answer, 'It is long of yourself, for you were the party that commended him unto me. . .'"² The Queen was a Catholic, and was little inclined to favor the cause of the Protestant party. However, she liked Abbot personally, and she listened to his plea that she request James to make Villiers a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, the same position Somerset had deprived him of earlier. Anne warned the Archbishop that Villiers, being a creature of James, would probably favor the Spanish marriage himself once he was established in power. Abbot later was to moan, "O noble Queen, how like a prophetess you spoke."³ But in 1615, Abbot was too anxious for the interests of the Protestant party to listen to such prophecy, and Anne at last consented to see the King. On April 23, despite Somerset's

1

Anne, perhaps, was jealous of Somerset because the favorite occupied the same place in James' affection which was rightfully hers as a wife. She never got along well with the Earl.

2

J. Nichols, ed., The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivals of James I, (London, 1828), III, 80. This is quoted from a letter of Abbot.

3

Ibid.

opposition, Villiers was made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber,¹ knighted, and given a pension of £1,000 per annum. A great victory had been won over Somerset and the Howards.

Somerset persisted in his attitude towards Villiers, and had he carried on like this for much longer, he might have been banished from royal favor simply for his bad behaviour. As it was, however, his downfall was effected by another means. In September, 1615, Sir Ralph Winwood, one of the two Secretaries and a staunch adherent of the Protestant faction, received information which indicated that Sir Thomas Overbury had been murdered in the Tower. Winwood obtained James' permission to investigate further, and by the end of the month both the Countess of Somerset and her husband had been implicated in the crime. Somerset was ordered to London by Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The Earl himself probably was not guilty of taking part in the murder, although he may have known² of his wife's guilt before the murder was discovered. However, he had good reasons to fear that some of his enemies might make it appear that he was guilty.

In October, James seems to have become convinced of his favorite's guilt, and he appointed a special commission

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 273.

² McElwee, 165.

to investigate the crime more thoroughly. It was not James' intention to create a commission which was biased against Somerset, but often the members of such an investigating commission consisted of Privy Councillors. Unfortunately for Somerset, a large number of Privy Councillors at this time were members of the Protestant faction.¹ Late in October, the commissioners satisfied themselves that the Earl and his Countess were guilty.

The lesser figures in the murder were brought to trial first and convicted before the year ended.² As peers of the realm, Somerset and Frances were not to be tried by regular judges, such as the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, but would be brought before the Court of the Lord High Steward, a dignitary selected by the King specifically to try peers.³ The man James selected to preside at the trial of the Somersets was Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, a staunch "Protestant". The prosecutor was the Attorney-General, Sir Francis Bacon.

¹ Winwood, Bacon, Ellesmere and others were strong on the commission.

² These were: Anne Turner, a dissolute widow who had procured poisons for the Countess; Sir William Monson, Keeper of the Ordnance in the Tower, who had helped arrange Overbury's poisoning; and Sir Richard Weston, who had been appointed as Overbury's keeper in the Tower. Along with these three, Sir Gervase Helwys, Keeper of the Tower, was convicted of complicity.

³ As such, the position was only temporary. Once a specific case had been tried, the Lord High Steward was dismissed.

There is insufficient evidence to reveal Villiers' exact thoughts at the time of the Overbury murder trials, but he must have viewed the downfall of Somerset with considerable relish. The uncovering of the murder plot provided the means of removing his great rival. How and when Villiers first became acquainted with Sir Francis Bacon is not known, but on January 22, 1616, we find the Attorney-General corresponding with the new favorite¹ in a very complimentary manner. Bacon was a great intellectual figure, and his reputation as an intellectual had been well established before the death of Elizabeth. However, the course of his public career before the rise of Villiers had been one of considerable frustration. In 1594, for example, when the post of Attorney-General fell vacant, Elizabeth had given the office to Sir Edward Coke, who thereupon became a lifelong enemy of Bacon. Under James, his fortunes improved slightly. He had been knighted in 1603 and had been created Solicitor-General in 1607. In 1613, he had been elevated to the Attorney-Generalship when Coke was advanced to the Chief Justiceship of the King's Bench. However, the able Bacon felt that he deserved more. In 1613, his career had been at the stage it might well have been twenty

¹ James Spedding, ed., The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon, (London, 1861-1869), V, 232.

years before, and at the age of fifty-two, Bacon was not getting any younger.

When Villiers appeared and Somerset lost favor with the King, Bacon seems to have placed all of his hopes upon the new favorite. When the Somersets were to be brought to trial for murder, an alliance seems to have been worked out between himself and Villiers. Bacon was already convinced of the Earl's guilt,¹ and his able legal mind would be invaluable in convicting Somerset. In return, Villiers would use his influence with James to advance Bacon. At this time, Bacon had an immediate goal in mind for himself. Lord Chancellor Ellesmere had fallen ill. Bacon wrote several letters to both King and favorite, requesting the reversion of the Chancellorship. The reversion was promised in February, and Villiers was definitely behind the promise, because Bacon thanked the favorite in a letter.² In the same letter, Bacon told Villiers that "I am yours surer to you than to my life."

Bacon believed that he would have no trouble in securing a conviction of the Countess. The evidence against her was overwhelming. As for the Earl, although

¹ Spedding, V, 278.

² Ibid., 245. The promise was carried out, although no patent was issued for the reversion. Ellesmere recovered early in February, and it was not until his eventual death in 1617 that Bacon received the reversion.

personally convinced of his guilt, Bacon was less sure that the evidence was conclusive. Here, however, Bacon was assisted by an accepted juristic theory of the times. This theory was that if an examining commission, appointed by the King to investigate a crime before it was brought formally to court, should decide that the accused party was guilty, then the decision of that commission should be upheld in the law court at the actual time of trial, even though the evidence was not perfectly conclusive. If the evidence were inconclusive, the accused could easily be pardoned by the King after being found guilty. The basic principle here was that the examining commission was erected by royal prerogative. If the decision of the commission were not upheld in a law court, then not only the commission but the royal prerogative, hence the King himself, would appear discredited.¹ This theory was to be used against Somerset. The commission, as previously stated, had already decided that the Earl was guilty. Furthermore, James decided to pardon the Somersets if a verdict of guilty were brought.² It was, however, a foregone conclusion that both would be banished from Court and royal favor forever if found guilty of the crime.

¹ Spedding, V, 283. Cf. Gardiner, II, 349-50.

² Spedding, V, 278 ff. Why exactly James wished to pardon the Somersets is uncertain, but he may have felt some sentimental attachment to his former favorite and his wife.

On May 24, 1616, the Countess of Somerset was brought before the High Steward's Court. All that she could do was plead guilty; the evidence against her was overwhelming. When she was asked whether or not she had anything to say before sentence was pronounced, she stated that she desired mercy, and pleaded with the court to intercede with the King on her behalf.

On the following day, Somerset himself was tried. There was no longer the slightest legal question that Overbury was poisoned by a plot contrived by the Countess. All that was really necessary to convict Somerset was to prove that he was an accomplice. Bacon spoke eloquently of the horrible nature of the crime and then stated that the Crown could prove four specific points: first, that Somerset had been among those who influenced James to imprison Overbury, which placed him in an excellent position to be poisoned; secondly, that Somerset had born malice against his former friend at the time of the murder; thirdly, that the Earl had sent poisons to Overbury in the Tower, in tarts; fourthly, that Somerset had done his best to destroy evidence which might have proved him guilty. All points, except the third one, were easily proven. None of them proved guilt of murder, but Somerset was faced with a juristic theory which held that he should be found guilty. Furthermore, he could no longer count on royal favor. Many in the jury were his enemies. He tried valiantly to prove his innocence by using correspondence of

of his own written at the time of the murder. His defense was unsuccessful.

Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, was found guilty of being an accomplice to murder and he was returned to the Tower. The patents for the pardon of both he and his wife were issued in July, but the two remained in prison until 1622. Although Somerset lived on until 1645, George Villiers had become the only royal favorite of James in 1616. Also, a close relationship between Villiers and Bacon had been established, which was to be the basic factor behind the heyday of Bacon's public career and which became very important to Villiers' own career when Bacon became Lord Keeper of the Great Seal¹ in 1617.

It was during and after Somerset's fall that a close friendship developed between Villiers and James. Throughout life, James showed a great delight in pleasant, intimate companionship, and his attractive young favorites always became his best companions. Once Somerset had been removed from the scene, there was only Villiers to delight the sovereign in leisure hours. It seems that James found in Villiers what he evidently lacked in family relationships. He and his Queen drifted apart after their marriage in 1598, and did not live together in England. Anne could not

1

Lord Keeper of the Great Seal was an inferior title for Lord Chancellor. Bacon received the superior title in 1618.

share her husband's academic interests, and thus, to James, she confirmed a rather foolish contempt with which he regarded women.¹ Henry, his eldest son, he held in high regard, and the death of that prince of typhoid fever in 1612 was a great blow to James. Henry's death caused James to be without close family connections for years. His only daughter, Elizabeth, married and went abroad in 1612, shortly after Henry's death. His relations with Charles were not very good until about 1617.² Somerset, who rose before 1612, did not fill a vacuum in James' family life because no such vacuum existed. But it can be inferred that Villiers, who rose after 1614, may have provided a substitute for a son to James.

Villiers was very able in discovering the things which pleased James and he acted accordingly. Friendship with James involved being very pleasant to him, even when he was extremely angry, comforting when he was ill or upset, agreeing with him at all times. James was very fond of elaborate entertainments and balls, and Villiers' skill at dancing was phenomenal. "No one", wrote Arthur Wilson, another contemporary observer, "dances better, no man runs or jumps better. Indeed, he jumped higher than ever Englishman did in so short a time, from a private

¹ Willson, 95.

² Ibid., 406.

gentleman to a Dukedom."¹ Villiers had a great deal of ability at all forms of sport, including hunting, which James loved. James, as a man of scholarly interests, frequently liked to spout long orations to close friends on philosophical and theological subjects. How boring it must have been for a spirited young man like George Villiers, who did not have an academic or religious molecule in him, to listen to long, dry talks on theology. However, the new favorite always provided a willing audience. He also pleased James by diligent attendance at divine service.

In 1616, when Somerset fell from royal favor, Villiers' growing intimacy with James was expressed by a heavy shower of favors. In January, he was created Master of the Horse.² On April 24, St. George's Day, he was made a Knight of the Garter.³ In the same month, he received the extensive lands once belonging to Lord Grey of Whaddon,⁴ and in March, some estates once belonging

¹ Arthur Wilson, The History of Great Britain, being the Life and Reign of King James the First, (London, 1653), 105.

² CSP Ven., 1615-17, 104. ³ Ibid., 190.

⁴ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 424. Lord Grey of Whaddon had died in the Tower in 1614. He had been imprisoned there in 1604, after being convicted of complicity in the Arabella Stuart plot.

1
to Somerset. In July, he was made Chief Justice in Eyre
2
South of the Trent. In August, he was created Viscount
3
Villiers, Baron Whaddon. Thus, by the end of 1616,
George Villiers had been made a peer and was well on his
way to becoming one of the wealthiest men in England.

An interesting and well known detail about Villiers' intimacy with the King was James' use of the nickname "Steenie". He always called his favorite "Steenie" in informal address. "Steenie" was a nickname for "Stephen", and the source of the appellation was the New Testament. The Biblical St. Stephen was reputed to have been the personification of masculine beauty and charm, and thus the use of the nickname testified both to James' renowned interest in Biblical study and his
4
great love for George Villiers.

1
CSP Dom., 1611-18, 424.

2
Ibid., 383. The duties of this ancient legal office were performed by deputation. Villiers did not do the work himself; another man performed them for a small salary, while Villiers reaped the profits of the office.

3
Spedding, VI, 4-8. This title was Bacon's idea. "Baron Whaddon" was given to ensure that Villiers' descendants would receive the estates formerly belonging to Lord Grey of Whaddon. "Viscount Villiers" symbolized the possession of these estates by the Villiers family. However, "Whaddon" was afterwards changed to "Bleechly", at Bacon's further suggestion, to avoid offending Whaddon's surviving relatives and friends.

4
Goodman, I, 229.

Before 1617, Villiers was not only loved by James but also by many other people at Court. Sir Henry Wotton wrote: "He was no sooner admitted there in his own right, but the eyes of all such as either looked out of judgment or gazed out of curiosity, were quickly directed towards him. . ." ¹ Both Abbot and Bacon, for example, thought him to be a very likeable personality. ² Later, the peers of the realm were to consider him, not without some justification, to be an irritating upstart; but at this early stage of his career he was respectful and obedient to persons of higher rank than himself, such as the Archbishop. He was very aware, it seemed, that before the King took a fancy to him, he had been the son of a common gentry family, with no qualifications for high rank other than his ability to please the King. As a likeable personality, he was considered a marked contrast to Somerset, who became extremely heady as soon as he was well established in royal favor: "For George was of a good nature, which the other was not. . ." ³ His physical appearance was admired. The grace of his carriage was constantly praised, as was his excellence at dancing and sports. ⁴ His taste in apparel was considered exemplary.

¹ Sir Henry Wotton, "The Disparity Between the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Essex", Reliquiae Wottonianae, (London, 1651), 54. Hereafter cited as Wotton, Disparity.

² Spedding, V, 226. ³ Nichols, III, 81.

⁴ Ibid., 225.

Beneath all of this sweetness and charm, however, there lurked a burning ambition, perhaps created by his mother's upbringing and nurtured by his great successes during his first two years at Court. Some observers may have penetrated beneath his surface at this time, perceiving that "he had masked under it [his charm] so terrible a¹ courage as would safely protect all his sweetness. . . ." But it seems that most people were thoroughly taken in by the appearance of the rising favorite and believed that he was "as inwardly beautiful as he was outwardly, and² that the world had not a more perfect gentleman." George Villiers was very good, it seems, at fooling people, and one should not be too critical of those whom he fooled, because among them was Sir Francis Bacon, one of the finest minds of his age. The seeds of Villiers' eventual unpopularity were sown in mid-1616, when he became the second most powerful person in England, next to the King himself.

¹ Wotton, Disparity, 54.

² Weldon, "Secret History of the Court of James the First", The Secret History of the Court of James I, ed. Sir Walter Scott, (Edinburgh, 1811), I, 416-17.

CHAPTER II

SECOND ONLY TO THE KING

(1616-1617)

It was the third basic factor in his relationship with the King that led to Villiers' reception of administrative powers. This element was James' desire to place into the hands of his favorite much of the administrative work which the sovereign normally was obliged to deal with himself. James gave Villiers the task of initially receiving all matters which were intended for the monarch's attention.¹ Such matters were suits, petitions, requests, diplomatic correspondence and other affairs. Of all these things, only those which Villiers judged to be of great interest to James would be forwarded by him to the King. James' role in dealing with all other matters, of lesser importance, was to be pure formality. Villiers would make the decisions on the numerous affairs which did not interest the King, or pass them on to someone else, and James would normally accept these decisions without going to the trouble of considering these lesser matters himself.

1

Spedding, VI, 13-56. This refers to two letters of advice written by Bacon to Villiers shortly after the favorite received his administrative role. Because Bacon discussed all kinds of administrative affairs in his advice, it is obvious that Villiers was to deal with all matters and not merely certain kinds. These letters will be discussed in detail below.

The position Villiers was placed in was not a formal office. As such, it differed from such offices as those of Lord Chancellor and Lord Treasurer. While the latter positions had existed for centuries as permanent, institutionalized features of the administration, Villiers' job, although very powerful, was actually that of a "private secretary", one might say, to James. His "office" certainly did not become a permanent feature of English government. Because the favorite's administrative role was not a formal office, it is impossible to date his reception of the task by referring to a patent, which would have a date written on it. However, the date of one particular letter suggests that he received his job at some time in the late summer of 1616.¹

It was expected that the King, as chief of state, would devote considerable time and energy to government affairs. However, it was a widely held opinion of the times that James did not devote enough time to business.² There were

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 492 ; Spedding, VI, 9.
The letter is dated August 20, 1616. Spedding quotes from it as follows: "This is now the man by whom all things must do and must pass. . .". The writer was referring directly to Villiers.

² Willson, 178.

three main causes for this lack of attention. One was that James loathed being bothered with matters which he considered minor. Secondly, he devoted too much time to purely private interests and diversions. The third reason, which is true only of the period of Villiers' career, not earlier, is that James often suffered from ill health, and this seriously impaired both his desire and his capacity for work.

Important, basic matters of state, especially those which demanded his intellectual powers, were of great interest to James and they received his close attention. However, most of the business which was brought to the attention of a monarch was of a comparatively petty, dull and detailed nature. The King often was presented with numerous petitions, requests and suits from private individuals, most of whom the King did not know, and James, throughout his reign, never showed much interest in dealing with the public.¹ Diplomatic correspondence which pertained to decisions or events of great importance was eagerly read² by him, but unimportant letters were ignored. James had no

¹ Willson, 178 ff.

² Ibid.

interest in finance, and he usually paid little attention to detailed financial matters of government unless they were of pressing importance. Hating the dull, detailed routine of being King, James often escaped into a private world of diversion.

Many of the King's private enjoyments were associated with his academic interests. He often liked to spend hours studying a favorite author, poring over passages of Scripture, writing, or discussing subjects with friends. His academic pursuits, however, did not consume as much time, nor were they as debilitating as other pleasures. James was grossly fond of elaborate banquets, balls and masques, which cost a prodigious amount of money and which wasted a great deal of time. Moreover, the inevitable effects of drunkenness would linger with him long after a costly revel, and this incapacitated him for more serious pursuits. It must be said, however, that of all James' diversions, his favorite, and the one which occupied the most amount of time, was hunting. One of the things which so greatly endeared England to him, from his arrival in 1603, was the number of great royal estates- Royston, Theobalds, Windsor, Huntingdon, to mention only four- which were perfect for the chase.

It was not long after his coronation in 1603 that Councillors and other officials discovered the difficulty in obtaining the attention of the monarch. Sometimes he

attended Council meetings regularly, but often he was away hunting at one of his country estates. He travelled much, and it was difficult at times to locate him. The year 1605 provides an excellent example of his seemingly ceaseless wanderings. In January he left Whitehall, where he had spent Christmas, and spent much time, in the same month, at Royston, Huntingdon and Hunchingbrook. He returned to London in early February, but soon travelled again to Royston and from there went to Ware, Newmarket and Thetford, all in the month of February. By early March, he had returned to London, and spent the following four months near the capital, hunting all the time. In October, he was back at Royston, and did not come again to London until November, when he opened the first Parliament of his reign. After this, he was away for the remainder of the year.¹ James tried to justify his devotion to the hunt by believing that it preserved his own health and hence the health of the realm. In reality, he tended to overexert himself on a hunt, and often overslept the next day. Always volatile in temper, James was depressed or elated² by the fortunes of a hunt.

One can well imagine the trouble a messenger from the Court at London would have trying to locate such a

¹ Willson, 179.

² Ibid., 182.

wandering monarch. From 1616 on, the administrative difficulty created by James' overindulgence in the chase and other pleasures was compounded by frequent illness. When he was well he would hunt, and even when disabled he went along on hunts as a spectator. Chronic arthritis appeared in 1616, and became especially bothersome in the damp months of winter. It gradually grew worse, spreading to most of the joints of his body. Eventually, James could hardly move, until the warmth of summer gave him relief.¹ Arthritis became his main physical problem, but he never practised good habits of health, even by seventeenth century standards.² He ate poorly, and frequently his digestion was upset. Because he rarely washed, he itched insufferably and perspired heavily. When overheated, he often cooled off too quickly, sitting in a draught clad only in his undergarments. Thus, he frequently caught colds.³ In the spring of 1619, he suffered a severe case of kidney infection. He was confined to his bed at Theobalds for weeks, and for a while it was feared that he would die.⁴ Business suffered: it was reported that packets of correspondence a month old remained unopened.⁵

¹ Willson, 378.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 33.

⁵ Ibid.

But James recovered, and in early June we find him on another hunt. He cut open a stag's belly and bathed his feet in the blood, believing such to be a cure for his¹ arthritic feet.

There was a serious side to James, which, as has been suggested, was manifested most strongly in intellectual matters. James, who won the praise of the clergy for his knowledge and exposition of the Scripture, was intensely interested in theology and in the religious realities of his realm. He wrote a great deal of political theory, in which he defended the concept of the "divine right" of Kings. He strongly maintained that rulers were appointed by God to maintain goodness and order upon Earth, that rulers were rightly responsible to God alone for their actions, and that constitutional privileges of subjects were either usurped from rulers or² granted by royal grace. He sought to be a kind of "schoolteacher" to his subjects, writing pamphlets on

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 53, 56.

² Although the Whigs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thought of the "divine right" theory as an instrument of Stuart "tyranny", historians now understand it to have been used in England against those Jesuits who believed that a Protestant monarch should be deposed or assassinated.

There was little novelty in James' view of kingship. His distinction as a defender of divine right arises from the fact that he was the first English king to write and publish conventional theories.

behaviour, dress and habits of health, of which the best known is his Counterblaste to Tobacco, published in 1604.

In matters of state, James jealously upheld his prerogatives as King. When Parliaments probed into policies which were the concern of the royal prerogative, he scolded them fiercely. When in 1621, the House of Commons drafted a Protestation maintaining that it was their ancient right to discuss anything which came to their attention, including foreign affairs, James ripped the statement out of the Commons' Journal and sharply told the House to mind its own business. Dedication to peace for England marked most of the history of his foreign policy, and he came to envisage himself as the grand arbiter of peace for Europe.

In certain ways, James was a conscientious ruler. However, his lack of attention to certain aspects of business was another matter entirely. Given his overindulgence in diversions and his loathing of boring business, given his incapacitating bad health, it is no wonder that James wanted some other person to deal with many of the affairs presented to him: some person he felt he could trust. Such a person was his royal favorite.

Villiers, then, was to prevent James from being constantly bothered with affairs which did not interest him. However, the King already had numerous servants who did most of the administrative work. One could hardly expect a monarch to handle all of the details by himself. Assistance was essential, and the King had numerous administrative "assistants".¹ The Privy Council, the two Secretaries of State,² the Lord Privy Seal, the Lord Chancellor, the judicial officials, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Lord Treasurer and the multitude of other officials and clerks all had administrative duties long before James Stuart came to the throne of England and long before he decided to place responsibilities into the hands of a favorite. What was the relationship of Villiers' administrative role to the duties of other officials of government?

To describe what the favorite did, one might well

1

The King remained the executive head. The word "assistants", then, is an excellent descriptive term for all government officials. The sovereign could supersede the functions of any one of them and they held their offices entirely at royal pleasure.

2

Sometimes there was only one Secretary. During most of James' reign there were two.

begin by discussing what could happen to a matter of state business in the channels of the executive bureaucracy¹ without the existence of Villiers' job. The matter could be referred to many officials before a final decision was made. For example, if it involved Crown finance, it could be referred to the offices of either the Lord Treasurer or the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It might be sent to a commission or to a special committee erected ad hoc to deal with it. Many matters of state were, of course, formally discussed in Privy Council meetings.

The King, and the King alone, had the technical right to make ultimate decisions on all matters of state referred to the bureaucracy.² In actual practice, however, the role of the King in making ultimate decisions was often a pure formality. Usually, he simply adopted recommendations made by the Privy Council or by other bodies or officials.

1

Refer to the diagram in the Appendix of the thesis. The following account is based chiefly on G. E. Aylmer's important work, The King's Servants, (London, 1960), 7-26, henceforth referred to as Aylmer, Servants.

2

Ibid., 16. It should be noted that the two Secretaries had a well recognized dé facto right of using their own initiative on all but the most important matters of state.

Other, non-official influences might be brought to bear, such as recommendations from family members, or, as is particularly true of James, from royal favorites or other private friends. Some extremely unimportant matters might be dealt with by an official without the King's attention. One might say that in actual practice, the King usually "delegated" the decision-making to his executive "assistants" or to sources of private influence.

A decision, once made, would pass through one of several channels before it was expressed in a final and formal document. As a rule, it would follow one route.¹ It would begin as a written statement, dictated by the King, or by an authorized person, to a clerk in the personal staff of one of the Secretaries. This statement would be affixed with the royal Sign Manual. It would then be sent to the Clerks of the Signet, who wrote under the Secretaries, for a Signet impression to be affixed. After this, it would be transferred to the Clerks of the Privy Seal, minor officials under the Lord Privy Seal, who would affix the Privy Seal. After Privy Seal, it would be drafted into its final, formal, documentary form and then the Great Seal was affixed. By the reign of James, the

¹

Aylmer, Servants, 16.

officials of Chancery had long performed purely formal functions in regard to decisions originating from the monarch. The Great Seal had become a mere "rubber stamp".¹ However, the Lord Chancellor himself had an important power, rarely used but existent nevertheless. He had the right to delay or to halt altogether statements originating from the sovereign by refusing to affix the Great Seal. Thus, he could act as a check upon the Crown. It must be stressed, however, that this power was rarely used.² The important point here is that it was necessary for Villiers to be on good terms with the Lord Chancellor, and he always was. He had no disagreements with Ellesmere, right up to the death of the old man in 1617. Bacon, who

1

Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte, Historical Notes on the Use of the Great Seal of England, (London, 1926), 126 ff. Signet, Privy Seal and Great Seal were devices that made wax impressions on documents. The Sign Manual was the royal signature, either written out by the King himself, or stamped on a document by a metal reproduction of the signature. The latter device could be used by any authorized person.

The above was the usual, but not the only route of a communication from the King. The letter had to pass through Chancery and be affixed with the Great Seal. Certain letters could be passed through Privy Seal only, but these were valid only if the King was authorizing a money payment. There were two other shorter and less formal routes. The King could send a letter through the offices of one of the Secretaries, under a Signet, or one of the Secretaries could write, under his Signet, on the King's behalf. In the most informal route of all, the King could write a letter himself, or dictate it to one of the Secretarial clerks, and seal it, if sealed at all, with one of his own small personal seals. Aylmer, Servants, 16.

2

Ibid., 17.

held the office until 1621, was his own client, and so also was John Williams, who succeeded Bacon.

Despite the fact that the King had numerous "assistants", it was not necessary for a person to present a matter to an official. He could present it to the King himself. Also, as discussed, many of the matters of state which were presented initially to the officialdom found their way to the monarch. Despite his bureaucracy, the King had a great deal of work to do, and it has already been made clear that James devoted insufficient attention to the work which confronted him. How then did Villiers fit into this picture? All matters intended for the royal attention were to be given to him first. This applied both to affairs coming from government officers and from private individuals avoiding the bureaucracy. Thus, it may be said that Villiers acted as a supreme "channel" through which all matters were "to flow".¹ He stood above all other channels of communication between King and subject, between King and officers of state. This position was not a formal office

¹ Refer to diagram appended. Such words as "channel" and "private secretary" may be used to refer to Villiers' administrative position. Since it was not a formal office, it had no formal title, and the student is free to label it as he wishes.

but, in effect, he was superior to all regular officers of state in respect of his relationship to the King. Whatever the theory may have been, nobody held a position in the realm superior to him, except the King.

In considering Villiers' activities as the "channel" or "private secretary" to the King, it must be remembered that he held his responsibilities entirely at royal pleasure. He was the "channel" simply to serve James' personal wishes. The King could supersede his favorite's function at any time he chose. He could, for example, make his own decision regarding an appointment and ignore Villiers' recommendations. However, very few examples can be given of instances in which James did supersede Villiers' powers and effected decisions which frustrated¹ the favorite's designs.

A "channel" was not entirely new in 1616. From 1612, Somerset had held somewhat similar administrative² responsibilities. There were, however, many differences between the personalities and the careers of the two favorites. For one thing, Somerset was a Scot, and as such, he was never very popular at Court, except with the

¹ Cf. 75 ff., 103 ff., below.

² Halliwell, II, 126-7; Willson, 338. A thorough comparison of the two favorites would involve a detailed discussion of Somerset's career, which cannot be done within the scope of this work. It is interesting, however, to mention a few points.

Howard faction, which wished to use him. Early in his career, Villiers was popular with many people at Court.

A more important difference between Somerset and Villiers is that Villiers may have understood the whole basis of royal favoritism better than Somerset did. In the last analysis, everything depended upon the King's desires. Somerset's behaviour in 1615, after the appearance of Villiers at Court, shows that he either did not adequately comprehend the whole basis of his career or that years of power had caused him to forget it. It has already been noted that Villiers was very able in discovering the things which pleased James. Professor Willson points out that Somerset's ability to lend himself to¹ "all of James' foibles. . ." was somewhat restricted. Villiers, however, was never confronted with a rivalry² which paralleled his own battle with Somerset in 1615. Therefore, it is difficult to make a comparison. Maybe he would have behaved as foolishly as Somerset. This we cannot know.

The most significant contrast between the careers of the two favorites is that Somerset received an official

1

Willson, 385.

2

Cf. 127, below. The son of Sir William Monson never was a serious rival to Villiers, because James dismissed the youth almost immediately after his first appearance. When Villiers appeared in 1614, James encouraged him to frequent the Court.

appointment at about the same time that he became the "channel". He was made a Secretary of State. Villiers received no significant appointment until he was made a Privy Councillor in 1617. In fact, the only lofty formal office which Villiers ever held was that of Lord High Admiral, which he did not receive until 1619. The historian does not have to exert himself to explain this difference regarding appointments, notable though it is. The plain and simple fact was that in 1616, all of the high positions of government were filled. James, being a fair-minded man, was not the type of person to dismiss one of his servants simply to delight a private favorite. Had there been a suitable vacancy, Villiers might well have filled it. The reason for Carr's elevation to Secretary in 1612 was that Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, had just died.

Villiers and Somerset were similar in that both revealed their distasteful personalities after being elevated to power. Somerset displayed a pronounced arrogance and conceit after being elevated, and he was doubly unfortunate that his nationality had rendered him unpopular long before he had reached his zenith. Villiers was liked by many before he attained his prominence, but after that he followed in his predecessor's footsteps.

George Villiers was not a well educated man, and it was important for James to see that he received some training in statecraft, so that he could adequately handle his new position. It was especially important for the favorite to imbibe James' own views regarding government and policy so that Villiers, in dealing with government business, would not make decisions distasteful to James. Wotton had an appropriate general comment to make in regard to this topic. He stated that James took Villiers "into his regard, taught him more and more to please himself, and moulded him (as it were) platonically to his own idea. . ."¹ The "moulded" Villiers would not, for example, recommend men for office who were opposed to James' foreign policy. According to Wotton, James personally gave Villiers a great deal of instruction. However, there is insufficient evidence to describe the exact nature of James' instruction.

There are, however, two important letters of instruction written to the favorite by Sir Francis Bacon, containing

¹ Sir Henry Wotton, "The Parallel between the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Essex", Reliquiae Wottonianae, (London, 1651), 4. Hereafter referred to as Wotton, Parallel.

advice which Villiers requested.¹ The material is extremely well organized and beautifully written, testifying to Bacon's literary skill and his prowess as an intellectual. The exact dates of the pieces are unknown, but both were written about the time Villiers received his task as "channel".

Bacon began by reminding Villiers of the great importance of his new position in regard to the King:

. . . remember well the great trust you have undertaken. You are as a continual sentinel, always to stand upon your watch, to give him [James] true intelligence. If you flatter him, you betray him. If you conceal the truth of . . . things from him. . . you are as dangerous a traitor to his state, as he that riseth in arms against him. A false friend is more dangerous than an open enemy. Kings cannot possibly see all things with their own eyes; they must commit many great trusts to their ministers.²

Bacon went on to deal with the favorite's position vis-a-vis all those persons from the greatest officials to the humblest subject who were now beneath him:

It is true that the whole Kingdom hath cast their eye upon you, as the new rising star, and no man thinks his business can prosper at Court, unless he hath you for his good angel, or at least that you be not Malus Genius against him.³

¹ Spedding, VI, 13-56. Both letters contain essentially the same advice. Spedding believed that one letter was intended as a rough draft and was never given to the favorite.

² Ibid., 15. ³ Ibid.

He went on to advise Villiers not to anger or frustrate those below him unnecessarily, and he tendered purely practical advice on how to deal with petitions and requests efficiently, so that each person received fair and individual attention, and so that the work might not be too burdensome for the favorite.

Bacon classified the affairs of state which would confront Villiers into eight groups: the Court, religion and the Church, the law, the Council and weighty matters of state, foreign relations, war, colonies and trade. He gave detailed advice on how the favorite should deal with each kind of business.

Regarding the Court, Bacon stated that the favorite should allow only honest and wise men to be prominent. The Court must be free "from flattery or sycophants,¹ the bane of all courts." The pleasures of courtiers are "fit in their season, but if they shall be too common they will lose their repute, and become arguments of lightness rather than of recreation."² Positions in the Church, Privy Council and in the administration should only be filled by the most scrupulous and learned of courtiers.

Bacon admonished the favorite to uphold the thirty-nine articles of religion and to reject all suggestions for

¹ Spedding, VI, 24. ² Ibid., 25.

change and innovation in the Church which might be presented
to him.¹ As the King's lieutenant, Villiers also was to be
a defender of the faith. So also was he to defend the law.

Bacon expressed the hope that the Council and the
King would deal with the most crucial and weighty matters.
In foreign affairs, the favorite himself should preside
over ceremonies pertaining to embassies and only he should
receive ambassadorial requests for royal audience.
Graver matters, however, such as treaties and important
communications, should be referred to the King or to men
of great experience in such things. Bacon expressed
pleasure with James' policy of maintaining peaceful relations
with other powers, but he cautioned the favorite that the
Kingdom should always be ready for war.

In dealing generally with colonies and trade, Bacon
expressed ideas usually called "mercantilist" by historians
and economists.² Trade should be so geared that "the
exportation of home commodities be more in value than the
importation of foreign, so we shall be sure that the stocks
of the Kingdom shall yearly increase, for thus the balance
of trade must be returned in money or bullion." Merchants

¹
The thirty-nine articles were the official tenets of
doctrine of the established Church of England.

²
Charles Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, 1603-1763,
(London, 1965), 57 ff. The ideas usually lumped together
as "mercantilism" were not completely new in Bacon's
time but were still in their infancy.

should import products of value not "toys and vanities. . . but first for necessity, next for pleasure, but not for luxury."¹ Colonists should be loyal subjects, obedient to the laws and devout adherents of the established Church. They should be well governed, well equipped and cared for, so that they might prosper, contribute to the prosperity of the mother country and be able to defend themselves in time of war. The natives of territories colonized should be well treated and not displaced on religious pretexts.

The administrative role of George Villiers gave him great power. As has been noted, he developed a close friendship with the King long before the summer of 1616. Even then, before he became James' "channel" for business, he possessed considerable influence with the King. It is known that he was behind Bacon's reversion of the Chancellorship, promised early in 1616, before he became the "channel". But his administrative job gave him far greater power over governmental matters. The basic potentiality of his position is obvious, if one thinks about it for a moment. He was the man who was initially to receive all matters which were intended for the King's eye. He would be responsible for all these things except those of interest to the King. Villiers, then, could have a free

¹ Spedding, VI, 27.

and ruling hand in policy-making, appointments and conferment of titles, unless the King, and only the King, should intervene. It was his ability to control the granting of offices, peerages and knighthoods which provided him with the basic power to dominate the Court.

As Arthur Wilson wrote, "the Grandees cannot do well but by him, either for place, or office in court and common-wealth."¹ In Tudor and Stuart times, merit and achievement certainly were important factors in receiving appointments to office. However, the essential means of getting a first appointment or a promotion in government, and in procuring a title, was to rely on the influence of a prominent figure at Court. Such a prominent person is known as a patron. As the "channel", all requests for office and title were presented initially to Villiers. Thus, he became the second most powerful patron in the realm when he became the "channel". The most powerful patron was, as it always had been, the King. There were, however, restrictions to Villiers' power of patronage.

As already stated, he could not violate the wishes of the King regarding an official appointment or the conferment of a title. Secondly, he could control only those official appointments which the King himself could control. The granting of all peerages and knighthoods was

¹

Wilson, 105.

a royal prerogative, but such was not true of all offices in the government. The King could appoint or discharge at will all of the highest officers in the administration, many of the middle-ranking ones and some of the lowest, but not all. It would be a pointless task to list all of the offices which the King could or could not control, but Chancery might be taken as an example of a court in which he could appoint only a small fraction of the total personnel. He could appoint the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the ¹Rolls. Most other officers in the court were appointed either by the Lord Chancellor or by the Master of the Rolls. As the "channel", Villiers could control only those appointments which the King could dispense.

From 1616 to 1618, there was an even greater restriction on the favorite's exercise of patronage. Villiers could only make appointments to vacant offices. James was not the kind of man who would have dismissed some of his servants simply to satisfy the personal wishes of

1

The King also could influence Chancery appointments which were created by letters patent. Also, during Elizabethan times and afterwards, the Crown tried to wean certain Chancery offices away from the control of the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls. The only two officers, however, which the King clearly could appoint or dismiss entirely at will were the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls. W. J. Jones, The Elizabethan Court of Chancery, (Oxford, 1967), Chs. II and III.

a favorite. If Villiers wanted his own clients to fill certain offices, he would have to wait until the incumbents either died or were dismissed after arousing royal displeasure or being convicted of official misconduct. In the period 1616 to 1618, several of the highest offices of state and many of the lower ones were filled by members of the Howard faction. It was not until 1618, when the Howards were purged from office, that the favorite was in a position to make his own appointments to these offices. Thus, in reference to the period before the fall of the Howards, it may be said that Villiers had only a latent power of control over many of the offices of state. He did make many appointments but the only important one before 1618 was the elevation of Bacon to the Lord Keepership, which was done before the favorite even became the "channel". The rest of his official conferments at this time were of a minor nature.

The ability to control appointments did become very important to Villiers after 1618. It provided him with the key means of procuring officials who would at least not oppose his own wishes regarding policy. But before that year, there is no evidence which suggests that he was even interested in influencing policy. It was not until 1618 that he decided to champion the proposed marriage alliance with Spain. Although matters pertinent to policy, domestic as well as foreign, must have passed

through his hands, he seems to have taken no interest in them, and probably passed them on to others. Of far greater interest to Villiers before 1618 was the conferment of peerages and knighthoods, which made him a very rich man.

Offices and titles, as a rule, were sold by the government,¹ and thus provided an important source of revenue. Also, the recipient of an office or title usually paid a sum to his patron for the patron's "assistance" in the procurement of the honor. Villiers, as the second most powerful patron in the realm, received a fortune in gratuities from men who approached him. The annual income he derived from patronage would vary from year to year, depending, of course, upon the number of requests for titles and offices which were presented to him. It is to be assumed, however, that the favorite's income from patronage was huge--tens of thousands of pounds² per year.

The period 1603 to 1630 saw a wholesale conferment of peerages and knighthoods which reflected the poor financial situation of the Crown and which became one of

1

A person high in royal favor might receive an office or a title as a gift from the King. Villiers, for example, did not pay a farthing for any office or title he received.

2

This is apparent from what is known about the finances of the Cecils, Cranfield, and other leading figures of this period. There is no direct evidence which one might use to determine the favorite's exact income.

the most controversial issues of the times.¹ It has been well established by economic historians that the Crown did not receive adequate revenues during Elizabethan and Stuart times. The ordinary revenues were far from adequate to cover Crown expenses and taxations granted by Parliaments did not yield maximum amounts, partly because people did not honestly assess their incomes.² This was one major reason for the Crown's financial difficulties. James' poor spending habits and administrative corruption³ were two others. James incurred huge debts during his

¹ Families which had held knighthoods or peerages for several generations tended to look down on those who purchased honors during this period. They considered most of the newcomers to be of base birth, without outstanding merits or achievements, and simply possessed with the wealth which enabled them to purchase their honors. After the rise of the favorite, the Villiers family was considered to be one of these base-born families, even though they had received their honors as gifts from the King and had not purchased them. Lawrence Stone, "The Inflation of Honors", Past and Present, (No. 14, November, 1958), 47.

² The ordinary revenues included all sources of revenue except certain kinds of taxation which could only be conferred by Parliaments. They included all monies received from Crown lands, from the sale of offices and titles, tunnage (customs duties on the tun of wine imported, a tun being a barrel of approximately 252 gallons capacity), and poundage (customs duties paid on the pound of certain goods imported).

³ James' notorious extravagance has been thoroughly discussed by almost every historian who has written on the period and will not be discussed here. See David Willson, passim, for one of the best accounts. Administrative corruption will be discussed in IV, below.

reign and was compelled to adopt various projects for raising revenue. Among these were projects for the sale of honors.

In Tudor and Stuart times, England was a wealthy country. Merchants and other businessmen, for example, made large profits from trade and domestic industries. The seizure of monastic lands by Thomas Cromwell, beginning in 1536, and the subsequent sale of these lands made great estates available to anybody who could purchase them. Possession of land was considered prestigious during this period and so also was the possession of a peerage or a knighthood. Coupled with this desire to rise in the social scale was the Crown's need for more revenue. It was this basic situation which created the fantastic sale of knighthoods and peerages during early Stuart times.

Before the reign of James, much of the profit from the granting of honors was acquired by the College of Arms.¹ Also, before 1603, the number of peers and knights was almost static.² The Tudors, particularly Elizabeth, tended to think of honors as great distinctions, to be acquired by inheritance or to be given only to the most able and most highly valued servants of the Crown. Although Elizabeth often needed extra

¹ Stone, 47.

² Ibid.

revenue almost as strongly as James did, she refused to create an open market for honors, wherein anybody who could afford the cost could be knighted or ennobled.¹ It was not until the reign of James that the doors to social advancement were flung open.

Between the death of Elizabeth and the end of 1604, 1,159 new knights were created, tripling the number of English knights.² Furthermore, profits from the sale were taken away from the College of Arms and placed into the hands of the Crown. This wholesale granting of knighthoods declined somewhat by 1610, because of the opposition it aroused, but it did not die out until after the assassination of the favorite in 1628.³ Villiers refused to relinquish such an important part of his own personal income.

1

It was not until the latter years of Elizabeth's reign that the Crown began to acquire a sizeable debt. The better financial situation in earlier times was due in no small measure to the financial wizardry of Lord Treasurer Burleigh. However, it was recognized that the Crown was not tapping the great pecuniary resources of the Kingdom. Although she refused to create an open market for honors, Elizabeth did allow the custom of charging large sums of money for offices to become established. Stone, 47.

2

Ibid., 49.

3

Ibid.

The number of people holding the traditional titles of Baron, Viscount and Earl did not substantially increase until 1615.¹ In that year, James decided to sell great numbers of these peerages as well as knighthoods. In 1611, the Crown decided to create a new title of nobility--Baronet. This was done mainly to provide an entirely new source of revenue. However, another probable motive behind the creation of the new peerage was to appease the older knighthood. Because they desired to rise above the base-born "newcomers" to the rank of knight, the older knightly families began to wish to be elevated into the nobility. The social gap between knight and Baron, the lowest rank of peerage, was considered very great; it was not thought proper that a multitude of knights should suddenly become Barons. Thus, it was decided to create a new title of nobility, intermediate² to knight and Baron.

Villiers, as the "channel", was able to control the conferment of all knighthoods and peerages, except, it seems, Baronet. When the title was initiated in 1611, a special commission was appointed to receive applications

¹ Stone, 55. The titles of Marquis and Duke have been omitted from the discussion because only three men, Buckingham, Lennox and Hamilton held these two titles during early Stuart times. See 74, below.

² Ibid.

and to make recommendations.¹ As a rule, the letters patent for the conferments of the title were issued under the Great Seal upon the recommendation of this commission alone. The King did not review the applications himself and hence Villiers would not have reviewed them. It must be added that one of the conditions for receiving the title was that the grantee swear that he had not given a gratuity to a courtier.² Villiers' inability to control the conferments of Baronet, however, was not a major gap in his power over patronage. Although precise figures cannot be quoted, it is not difficult to see that the income he received from patronage must have been enormous.³ Requests for all other titles of nobility and knighthoods passed through his hands, and he lived in a period in which conditions demanded that large numbers of honors be sold.

Through the course of two years, George Villiers had risen from obscurity to become a peer of the Realm and the second most powerful man in the Kingdom. The pathway to glory had not been difficult. His fortunes

¹ Maxwell-Lyte, 212.

² Stone, 52.

³ The number of knighthoods and peerages along with the names of people who received them could easily be determined by an examination of the Patent Rolls (which have not been calendared and hence were unavailable for the preparation of this thesis). However, amounts given as gratuities to Villiers, or to any patron for that matter, were purely private transactions and were not officially recorded.

were based entirely upon his ability to attract the King. There were no other merits, there was no hard work or achievement involved. Only Somerset had tried to block his progress, and Somerset's opposition had been greeted with royal ire. Shortly after his elevation to "channel", George Villiers began to use his new powers for his own gain.

CHAPTER III

THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUCKINGHAM FACTION

(1616-1618)

The period from mid 1616 to early 1618 saw the emergence of a new party at Court, based upon the patronage of the favorite. Outside of the positions of Villiers and Bacon, however, the faction did not possess much power in the government during this period. Most of the people who profited from Villiers' patronage at this time were his own relatives, and none of the favorite's clients received high office. Before 1618, many of the offices of government, including several of the highest, were either controlled or occupied by members of the Howard faction.

Villiers himself became an even closer companion to James after 1616, and his fortunes did not remain at a standstill. James, often ill from 1616 until his death in 1625, was frequently melancholy and morose, and he tended to lean more and more upon the affections of Villiers and his kinfolk for companionship and cheer: "he is never so out of tune, but the very sight of my Lord of Buckingham¹ doth settle and quiet all." In June, 1618, James held a feast in honor of the Villiers family and declared that

¹

Thomas Birch, ed., The Court and Times of James the First, (London, 1848), II, 115.

"he desired to advance [the Villiers] above all others
1
. . . said he, 'I live to that end.'"

James continued to shower favors on Villiers.

In January, 1617, he was created Earl of Buckingham, and
2
in February, he was made a Privy Councillor. In April,
James went on Progress through Scotland, the first time
3
he had been in the land of his birth since 1603.

Buckingham accompanied him, and in late May the Scottish
Privy Council made him one of its members, an honor
4
never before given to an Englishman. On January 1, 1618,
he was created Marquis of Buckingham, and became the
5
only English Marquis created by James. Numerous were the

1
Birch, II, 78.

2
CSP Dom., 1611-18, 423, 432. He will be henceforth
referred to as Buckingham. Perhaps nothing better
illustrates his lack of interest in policy at this time
than his persistent absence from Council meetings.
3
Acts of the Privy Council, (London, 1908-1912), XXXVIII, passim.

4
It was widely known that James' underlying motive behind
the Scottish Progress was to seek means of establishing
Anglicanism in the northern Kingdom.

5
CSP Ven., 1617-19, 515. Buckingham was not active in
the Council and his appointment, in effect, became
nothing more than an honor. Register of the Privy Council
of Scotland, (Edinburgh, 1872-98), XI & XII, passim.

6
CSP Dom., 1611-18, 510. The only other Marquis in 1618
was James, Marquis of Hamilton, of the Scottish peerage.
The only peer in both Kingdoms who outranked Buckingham
at this time was Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox
(Scottish). Buckingham was not made Duke until May, 1623.

royal manors which were given to Buckingham.¹ The wealth and titles given to him were very great, but Buckingham did not receive any lofty appointment, other than being made a Councillor, before his creation as Lord High Admiral in 1619.

There is an interesting story related to Villiers' reception of the reversion of one particular minor office. The office in question was that of the enrolment of pleas² in the Court of King's Bench. For many years, the task had been performed by one Sir John Roper. In 1612, James had granted the reversion of the office to both Somerset (then Viscount Rochester) and the son of one Lord Harington. By the terms of the grant, Somerset and Harington were to share the profits of the office, after Roper's death, and the functions of the post were to be executed by deputies. It was customary, at this time, that the names of men of great rank should not appear on the warrant for such an arrangement, and Somerset and Harington each had selected a man whose name would be written on the document.

¹ In addition to the lands of Somerset and Lord Grey of Whaddon, noted above, Buckingham also received the manor of Fleet in Lincolnshire, which was reputed to be very productive. CSP Dom., 1611-18, 440.

² The duty of this office was to record all cases coming before the King's Bench.

Each nominee was to receive one twelfth of the profits of the office and would make sure that the rest of the profits were delivered to Somerset and Harington. Two lawyers had been selected as the nominees. Somerset had selected one Robert Heath, and Harington had selected one ¹James Whitelocke.

Early in 1614, Harington died without issue, and Somerset decided to acquire both Harington's former share of the profits and the one-twelfth share of Whitelocke, Harington's nominee. Harington's sister had agreed to cancel Harington's part in the reversion, and Whitelocke received £800 as compensation. Henceforth, Whitelocke ²was connected only nominally with the patent.

After the downfall of Somerset in 1616, James decided to give the reversion to Villiers. Villiers was pleased but he wanted more. He knew that Roper had set his heart on a peerage, and he asked Roper if he would be willing to grant immediate possession of the office and its profits in exchange for the title. ³Roper agreed tentatively, and the favorite approached the King regarding the title. The whole affair became upset when James demanded £10,000 from Roper as the price of the title, to cover the costs of an

¹ Gardiner, II, 31; James Whitelocke, "Liber Familicus", The Camden Society, ed. John Bruce, (London, 1857), LXX, 29, 46, 59. Both Heath and Whitelocke later achieved fame in their legal profession.

² ³ Gardiner, II, 32-33. Ibid., 33.

¹
embassy. Roper paid the sum and was created Lord Teynham,
but then, after paying such a large sum to the King, he was
unwilling to give Villiers immediate possession of the office
with its profits. All that Teynham could be persuaded to do
was grant immediate possession of the office but not the
²
receipt of profits.

In the drafting of the formal agreement, Villiers was to
have two nominees appear on the document. However, another
problem arose in this respect. The favorite decided to retain
Heath, Somerset's old nominee, but he wanted the second person
to be one Shute, a lawyer who had declared his devotion to the
³
favorite. Teynham, however, insisted that the other nominee
be his friend Whitelocke. It was only after Bacon had discussed
matters with Teynham that both Teynham and Whitelocke decided
⁴
to back down in the matter. In the formal document, drafted
late in November, 1616, Villiers was to have the office, but not
⁵
the profits, and Heath and Shute were to be the nominees.

This story is interesting both because it caught a
great deal of attention at the time and because it indicates

¹ Gardiner, II, 33.

² Ibid., 34.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Spedding, VI, 117-18.

⁵ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 407, 433. Shute received the Recordship
of London, a highly lucrative post, in 1619. Heath became
Solicitor-General in 1620, Attorney-General in 1625, and
defended Buckingham in the attempted impeachment of 1626.
He became Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1631 and
Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1634. Gardiner, II, 217;
VI, 67.

that Buckingham could not always get his own way. When James intervened, contrary to his favorite's designs, there was little that Buckingham could do about it. Also, there were a few men who could dare to stand their ground against the powerful favorite and get away with it. The appointment of Sir Henry Yelverton as Attorney-General¹ in 1617 also saw the favorite's plans frustrated.

The period 1616 to 1618 saw a change in Buckingham's behaviour, which was viewed by contemporaries as a fundamental change in personality. The sweetness and charm which hitherto had been observed by the Court was suddenly transformed, in Weldon's words, into "so terrible a courage. . ."² From this time on, Buckingham is to be depicted as a very egotistic and unscrupulous individual, who preserved his charm only for his kinfolk, his close companions, and the King. It would be pointless to list any examples of his conduct here. The events of his career demonstrate his nature, and all historians who have written on this period of English history have portrayed him as such.³ What had happened?

In July, 1617, Francis Bacon warned James that

1

See 103 ff.

2

Weldon, II, 416-17.

3

See Introduction, p. 3. Mr. C. R. Cammell, in The Great Duke of Buckingham, is the only exception to this generalization.

Buckingham's elevation had been too sudden. The rise of the young favorite from obscurity to as powerful a position as "channel" surely would go to his head.

It was suggested by Bacon that without the sobering experience of years of experience and hard work, he would become drunk with power and would abuse it.¹

Lord Acton's much quoted phrase: "Absolute power corrupts absolutely", would have been appreciated by Bacon. Buckingham's power was far from "absolute", but it was extremely great. The King failed to take Bacon's advice. He was overly infatuated with his delight:

And for our part, besides our own proof, that we find him furthest from that vice of any courtier that ever we had so near about us, so do we fear that you shall prove the only phoenix in that jealousy of all the kingdom.²

S. R. Gardiner, an eminent Stuart historian who wrote during the last century, apparently became inspired with Bacon's viewpoint and wrote:

It was a dangerous experiment to place the patronage of the Crown in the hands of a stripling. It would have been strange if so sudden an elevation had not turned his head. Placed, in the heyday of youth, in a situation in which he was courted by everyone who sought advancement, it required a stronger mind than his to resist the fascinations

¹ Halliwell, II, 143.

² Ibid.

of his position. It was so pleasant to feel that all the learning and ability in the Kingdom was at his disposal, and that a smile or frown from him could raise or depress the spirits of men who had risen, by lifelong toil, to the highest offices of the state.¹

Gardiner, although criticized for some of his viewpoints, notably his belief that the Civil War was a religious struggle, has been highly revered by many historians who have followed in his footsteps.² Most historians have accepted Gardiner's opinion that Buckingham was ruined by his rapid elevation:

He had what everyone craved: the ear of the King and the patronage of the Kingdom. Great men and small paid homage to him, and the King was the foremost of his worshippers. It is small wonder that his head was turned and that he became vain, wilful and arrogant.³

The opinion that Buckingham was infatuated with the power of his position can hardly be challenged. However, if the nature of his upbringing is again considered, reasons can be found which challenge the view that he was completely corrupted by his elevation to power. His mother, who, as previously noted, was extremely ambitious and selfish herself,

¹ Gardiner, II, 75.

² Kenyon, 7; Christopher Hill, Puritanism and Revolution, (London, 1962), 4 ff., 221-22.

³ Willson, 386.

had complete charge of his upbringing and she probably had hoped that her son could become a royal favorite and so benefit herself and her kin. Surely, evidence of Buckingham's egocentric personality may be seen as the result of her influence. The nature of his personality must have existed before his elevation to power and before his meeting with James in 1614. Why, then, was he charming and polite at Court during the first two years of his career? It is not impossible that he was wearing the mask of fraud. He definitely had to be polite and charming with the King, and he also must have felt obliged to maintain good relations with the Protestant party. Once he had become the "channel" of James, once he had become established in a powerful loftiness of his own, he could afford to shed his mask. He had little sense of loyalty; once he no longer felt the need of Abbot's and Pembroke's support, he became a champion¹ of the Spanish match. Buckingham probably was not corrupted by power, he was corrupt long before he emerged from obscurity in 1614. A little more knowledge about his early life, however, will be required to establish this point.

¹

See 108, below.

People who frequented the Court and who came to know Buckingham began to dislike him from late 1616 on. Wotton made the following observation:"the fortunes of our great personages met when they were both the favorites of princes, and of the people, but their affections to the Duke of Buckingham were very short-lived."¹ Dislike of the favorite's personality was coupled with jealousy and indignation expressed at the rapidity of his rise. The Villiers family, being of gentry origins, was considered "base-born". As discussed, the older nobility and gentry disliked the wholesale conferment of honors during this period and their feelings found a focal point in the Villiers family. It was no accident that the period of Buckingham's popularity at Court came during the period 1614 to 1616. Not only was he charming and polite at this time but he held no office superior to that of a Gentleman of the Bedchamber and no title superior to that of knight. After the trial of Somerset, favors fell on him like a cloudburst. One can well imagine the murmurings among the peerage and the courtiers when the young man, who two years before had been the scion of a gentry family, became an Earl because of the monarch's affection. One

¹

Wotton, Parallel, 195.

caused a fountain to splash water in Buckingham's face. James, seeing the mischief, not only gave Charles a scolding but also boxed his ears. In the spring of 1618, another quarrel between prince and favorite occurred over a tennis match, but on this occasion James was more tactful. He commanded both of them to make amends and to swear before¹ him to be friends forever. Charles was the heir to the throne, and Buckingham must have come to realize that his somewhat childish quarrels with Charles could have disastrous effects upon his own future. He and Charles indeed became friends, and Buckingham celebrated the conciliation by inviting his relatives and the entire royal² family to a feast, which he called the "friends' feast".

Buckingham's relationship with Charles was markedly different from his association with James. Charles, for one thing, was not a homosexual, and therefore the relationship was purely a nonsexual, friendly one. The more important difference, however, arose from a weakness which Charles did have, and this was the fact that Buckingham always personally dominated Charles. The interpretation of Charles' personality which is almost universally accepted by historians is that he suffered from feelings of inferiority

¹ CSP Ven., 1617-19, 80, 250-51; 1619-21, 11, 151, 238, 524.

² Birch, II, 78.

while young. He may have been born with a somewhat weak will, which was manifested by procrastination of decisions in adulthood, but it is certain that physical disabilities suffered in childhood, and later, did not help matters. He was small, awkward, and when excited he stammered horribly.¹ Long illnesses contributed to the problem. Unable to join in the robust activities of the Court, led as they were by the huntsman James, Charles grew up in a small world of his own, developing feelings of inferiority, which may eventually have contributed, in part, to a sense of aloofness. Buckingham presented an absolute contrast to Charles: being daring, athletic and suave, the favorite had everything which the prince admired and felt that he lacked himself. Early in Buckingham's rise to power, Charles' sentiments emerged as jealousy, because at this time the favorite was not willing to be friendly with the prince. But when Buckingham extended the warm hand of intimate friendship, Charles came to admire the favorite intensely. He looked up to Buckingham, and looking up to the favorite could only mean that he was personally dominated by him. It was this somewhat peculiar relationship that enabled Buckingham to be the virtual ruler² of England during the 1620's.

1

The stammering and shortness persisted throughout life, but the awkwardness disappeared in his late teens. Charles was a superb huntsman in adulthood.

2

As such, the consequences of this relationship cannot be discussed within the scope of this thesis.

While advancing himself in the royal favor and acquiring an important friendship with the heir apparent, Buckingham began to build up a faction of his own at Court, and he started with his own relatives. In regard to the favorite's own family, however, there is a problem in determining the precise means by which they gained favor. In 1618, James publicly declared that he wished to advance the Villiers family above all others, and for this reason it is not easy to determine whether the family profited from Buckingham's influence or directly from the generosity of James himself. It is impossible to precisely document the influence that occurred, in a private atmosphere, before an appointment or conferment of an honor was made, hence, one must guess at the answer to this problem. It should be noted that with one exception, namely Sir Edward Villiers, only Buckingham's full-blooded siblings and his mother actually profited greatly from his patronage. It is probable that Buckingham felt more endeared to his closest kinfolk, and in this light the favor shown to his relatives reflects his own personal sentiments. Thus, one can strongly suspect that his own influence must have been at work in the advancement of his kinfolk, despite James' resolution to be generous to the family.

The most important relative in Buckingham's life was his mother, Mary, Lady Compton, later the Countess of

Buckingham. It is not difficult to imagine the pleasure she must have felt when her son was rapidly elevated to a position where he could control Crown patronage. There can be little doubt that her ability to profit from it was very strong. In June, 1616, there is evidence of a growing friendship between herself and the King. James held a dinner party in her honor, to which the Countess of Suffolk was invited. The Countess was treated politely, but "all the entertainment was chiefly intended and directed to her Lady Compton and her children and followers. . ."¹
²
In July, 1618, Mary was made Countess of Buckingham.

The mother was instrumental in using her son's power for the profit of her kinfolk as well as herself. Arthur Wilson, the courtier, wrote: "her hand was in all transactions, both in church and state; and she must know the disposition of all things, when she had a feeling of every man's pulse. . ."³ At times, she seems to have inserted herself as a sort of "channel" between her son⁴ and all those who sought his favor. Wilson was exaggerating

¹
Nichols, III, 175.

²
CSP Dom., 1611-18, 550. It is important to distinguish between the Countess of Buckingham, who was Buckingham's mother, and the Marchioness, later the Duchess of Buckingham, who was the favorite's wife.

³
Wilson, 149.

⁴
Ibid.

when he said that her hand was in all transactions.

Buckingham had a mind of his own; he was not merely a tool for his mother. But Wilson's exaggeration suggests the strong impression that her activities made upon the Court. From 1616 to 1622, when she became a convert to Catholicism, she enjoyed the favor of King James most of the time.

But even James became annoyed with her connivances from time to time. In November, 1616, Buckingham felt obliged to ask her to stay from the Court for a while and to stop interfering with business.¹ At Christmas, 1617, she had been away from London for several weeks, and it was rumored that she again had irritated both the King and her son² for some reason. It is impossible to do justice to all of her schemes: once again, there is a problem of documentation in that many of them could not have been recorded. However, something must be said about her attempts to procure profitable marriages for her sons, most of which were highly successful. The best and earliest demonstration of her conniving nature at work in this regard was the marriage of John Villiers to Frances, daughter of Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The marriage was closely connected with the dismissal of Coke from his Chief Justiceship late in 1616.

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 402

² Ibid., 501.

Sir Edward Coke enjoyed a long and spectacular life. Although considerable criticism has been directed against him, he has long been recognized as one of the greatest figures in the history of English law. Despite his great fame, there is no authoritative biography of Coke and nothing has been written which fully explains the reasons for his downfall.¹ Something should be said, however, about the obvious facts concerning his dismissal and his subsequent restoration to favor.²

At various times from 1606, Coke upset his political masters for various reasons, the chief one being a violent controversy concerning prohibitions.³ Coke became notorious for issuing prohibitions against other courts, chiefly Chancery and High Commission, claiming that certain cases could not be tried in these courts but only in his own.⁴

1

Catherine Drinker Bowen's biography, The Lion and the Throne, (Boston, 1957), is not considered an authoritative biography, as the authoress herself admits. See Professor MacIllwain's review in the American Historical Review, (LXIII, November, 1957), 97-99.

2

No attempt will be made to go into the matter in any detail.

3

A prohibition was a writ forbidding a certain court from trying a certain case, or a certain kind of case.

4

There were probably selfish motives behind Coke's conduct here. The more cases a particular judge tried, the more income he received. In the past, Coke was thought of as a great champion of English Common Law against "Stuart tyranny". This view has been largely discarded, and the modern historian lays far greater stress upon Coke's selfishness. J. P. Kenyon, The Stuart Constitution, (Cambridge, 1966), 92.

In 1609, James stepped into the fray and tried to achieve a settlement on the matter of prohibitions. He informed the judges that he would listen to their recommendations, but that he alone, as King, would make the final decision based upon his own reasoning. Coke exclaimed that such a royal decision was not legal. The matter, to Coke, could not be decided by reason but only by a careful study of legal precedents, and the King, he said, was not qualified to do this. James may not have understood what Coke meant, but he was personally insulted and became furious with the Chief Justice.¹

There were other matters which caused James to become irritated about Coke. In Bate's case of 1606, Coke opposed the Crown's imprisonment of the merchant, John Bate,, for refusing to pay the imposition on currants he had imported.² He also publicly stated that benevolences were illegal, unless given out of the free and voluntary will of the donors.³ In 1615, in Peacham's case, Coke insisted, against all established custom, that the King had no right to consult the judges individually before they tried a case. In the same year, Coke proceeded to

¹ DNB, IV, 687.

² Kenyon, 55. The imposition on currants had been instigated by Elizabeth in 1601. Many people, however, thought them technically illegal.

³ DNB, IV, 688. A benevolence was an outright grant of money from a private person to the Crown. It is to be distinguished from a "forced loan" in that it was a grant, not a loan.

hear a case involving commendams, after James had ordered the case to be delayed until he had given it further consideration.¹ However, the only real expression of James' irritation before 1616 had been the removal of Coke from Common Pleas to King's Bench in 1613, where it was hoped that he would be quiet. It was possibly felt that it was the nature of the jurisdictional sphere of Common Pleas which had created the opportunities for Coke's rebelliousness. However, Coke persisted in his obstinacy.

In 1616, James' growing anger with Coke finally reached a climax. Two cases on which judgment had been given in King's Bench were heard in Chancery. Coke then charged that Chancery's interference was illegal. James and Bacon, Coke's old rival, examined the matter and decided that the action of Chancery had been perfectly legal and proper. Bacon then began a tirade against Coke, part of which was accepted by James. According to Bacon, Coke was upsetting the existent spheres of jurisdiction possessed by the various courts. As Chief Justice of both Common Pleas and the King's Bench, he had wrongfully tried to extend his powers. Furthermore, according to Bacon, many of his actions had been direct disobedience to the King's rightful authority.² In June, 1616, a series of charges against Coke

1

Kenyon, 92. A commendam was an additional benefice given to a prominent cleric by the Crown. The cleric received the revenues from the benefice but personally had no responsibilities. The duties were executed by a deputy who received a small salary.

2

Spedding, VI, 47.

were written and he was suspended at the end of the month. In November, despite a valiant defense of his conduct, Coke was formally dismissed. He was succeeded by Sir Henry Montague, a man who proved to be more agreeable from James' point of view and who had attached himself to Buckingham¹ earlier in the year.

Such was the dismal situation in which Coke found himself. In November, 1616, however, even before his formal dismissal, we read of the first inkling of an improvement in his fortunes.² In 1598, after the death of his first wife, Coke had married Lady Elizabeth Hatton, heiress of the great wealth of Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor and a favorite of Queen Elizabeth.³ Lady Hatton had given Coke a daughter, Frances, and in 1616, Frances was beginning to reveal that she had inherited her mother's physical charms. Among the many young men who were dazzled by Frances was the favorite's brother, Sir John Villiers. Sir John, however, being dull-witted and lacking in initiative, was unable to assert himself in the courtship of Frances. As it was, he was forced to rely upon the talents of his brother and his ambitious mother. Late in 1616, Lady Compton decided that Sir John would marry Frances, and that the Villiers family would feast on

1

DNB, XIII, 421.

2

CSP Dom., 1611-18, 402.

3

She was a second cousin of Sir Christopher.

the riches of Coke and Lady Hatton in the matter of a dowry. For Coke to consent to the match would mean the support of the Villiers family and hence a restoration to royal favor.¹ He greeted the proposed marriage with joy.

It was not long before Lady Compton revealed one of her intentions behind the proposal. She demanded from Coke the initial sum of £20,000 and £2,000 per year² thereafter as the dowry. Coke was horrified at the amount and at first would consent to only half that sum, saying³ that he would not buy the King's favor so dearly. Neither party would agree to the other's demands. In March, 1617, bargaining came to a halt, and it seemed for a while that the marriage would be doomed. But restoration to favor meant too much for Coke, and in July, he finally gave in to Lady Compton's demands. Because he was anxious to further the fortunes of the Villiers family, James heartily approved of the match, and soon everybody was expecting Coke⁴ to be restored to favor. However, his troubles were far from over.

Coke never had a good relationship with his wife, and he was never fond of reaching into his own money bags. In July, when he at last agreed to the match with Sir John,

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 402.

² Ibid., 476.

³ Ibid., 447.

⁴ Ibid., 472.

Lady Hatton knew that he would try to meet Lady Compton's exorbitant demands with her own Hatton wealth. This prospect she did not like at all. She forced Frances to sign a contract which obliged her to marry the Earl of Oxford, who was away in Italy at the time and who knew¹ nothing about Lady Hatton's schemes. Then, she decided to make Frances physically inaccessible to Coke, and she² took the girl away to her cousin's mansion of Oatlands.

At this point, Coke's old enemy stepped into the battle. Francis Bacon viewed the match as Coke's insidious attempt to get back into office. Not only would a personal rival be back at Westminster, but also a very unreliable servant of the King. Again he expressed his dislike of Coke in several letters to both King and³ favorite, strongly advising them against the marriage. Buckingham and James were away in Scotland on Progress at the time, and most of the commotion escaped their attention. If they had been in England in the summer, the opposition of Bacon and Lady Hatton would have been snuffed out very quickly. As it was, however, a high point in the melodrama was soon reached.

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 482.

² Ibid., 476.

³ Spedding, VI, 63 ff.

Lady Compton went to Chancery to procure a warrant which would authorize Coke to get his daughter back. Lord Keeper Bacon flatly refused her request, and she was forced to obtain the authority she needed from the influence of Sir Ralph Winwood, the Secretary, who was a friend of Coke.¹ She and Coke then went to Oatlands. Around their carriage were Coke's personal servants, all armed, led by "Fighting Clem Coke", Coke's son, who had enthusiastically taken up the quarrel against his step-mother. Lady Hatton refused to open the door, in spite of Coke's warrant, and the rowdy party was forced to break down the door with a log.² Poor Frances was dragged to the carriage, where Lady Compton, triumphant, was waiting to receive her. The marriage took place in October, 1617, and Bacon was sharply scolded for his interference. Coke did not receive back his old office, but he was made a Privy Councillor shortly afterwards.³ He remained on friendly terms with Buckingham until the Parliament of 1621.

Buckingham's other full-brother, Christopher, was reputed to have been a complete dullard and a very unattractive person. He created some frustration for his mother because the ladies would not have him. In 1619, two

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 476.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 492.

years after the marriage of Sir John, one finds him courting the young daughter of the Lord Mayor of London. The girl did not want him, and her father fell ill for some time, apparently being repelled by the thought of the marriage but fearing to incur the displeasure of James.¹ Christopher ended up marrying a distant kinswoman.²

Lady Compton's influence was also at work behind Buckingham's own marriage in 1620.³ There is no doubt that both she and her son were searching for a suitable bride throughout 1619 and perhaps earlier.⁴ At length, they decided upon Lady Katherine Manners, the daughter of Francis Manners, sixth Earl of Rutland. From the Villiers' point of view, the match was highly desirable. Rutland was one of the wealthiest men in the Kingdom. Also, through the marriage of his brother Roger, the late fifth Earl of Rutland, Francis Manners was connected to the distinguished and wealthy Sidney family.⁵ Francis, without male issue, had made Katherine his sole heiress. Katherine herself was not unattractive, and in 1619, she fell

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 47.

² DNB, XX, 324.

³ The discussion of this marriage will be the only incursion into the post 1618 period made in the thesis.

⁴ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 2.

⁵ Roger died without heirs and Francis succeeded to both title and wealth. Sir Philip Sidney was a very famous courtier and officer during the reign of Elizabeth.

passionately in love with Buckingham. The situation seemed ideal, but there were two major obstacles. First, Lady Katherine, like most of her family, was a Roman Catholic, and King James openly declared that his favorite must not marry a recusant.¹ Secondly, Rutland himself opposed the marriage, at first. In March, 1620, Buckingham presented his terms regarding a dowry. He demanded an initial sum of £20,000 and £4,000 per year thereafter from Rutland. The monied nobleman flew into a rage and refused to yield his daughter's hand.

Buckingham managed to remove the first obstacle to the marriage by effecting Lady Katherine's conversion to Protestantism. Here, he utilized the services of John Williams, a clergyman who became a valuable friend to Buckingham in later years.³ Williams had been a chaplain to Lord Ellesmere, the late Lord Chancellor, and when Bacon succeeded Ellesmere, Williams was requested to remain in his position. Williams, however, was too ambitious to serve a mere Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper. He was able to attract James by his natural wit and great learning,⁴ and, in 1618, he became one of the royal chaplains. In 1619,

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 3.

² Ibid.

³ He succeeded Bacon as Lord Chancellor in 1621.

⁴ DNB, XXI, 651.

probably at the direct request of James and Buckingham, Williams decided to do something about Lady Katherine's¹ religion. He spoke with her in private for long periods of time, and rather than denounce Catholicism directly, he tactfully took a more positive approach, convincing the lady of the excellence of Anglican beliefs. Her conversion was effected by William's brilliant eloquence in March, 1620, and the clergyman was highly praised by both monarch and favorite. The first problem had been overcome,² but Rutland still refused to give his daughter up.

Then, an event occurred which excited a great deal of gossip at Court. One day, shortly after Katherine's conversion, Rutland was informed that she had gone out with the Countess of Buckingham in the morning and had failed to return at night. Rutland immediately suspected the worst. It was enough that he had been confronted with an exorbitant demand for a dowry, let alone his daughter's apostasy from the faith in which she had been reared. Now, there was an apparent violation of her chastity, all³ at the hands of the Villiers. He refused to take her back into his own house and ranted his indignation at Buckingham. Buckingham denied that Katherine's reputation had been violated and insisted that she had taken ill at

¹ Nichols, III, 86; IV, 606.

² Ibid., 606

³ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 133.

the Villiers' residence and had slept there overnight.¹
Rutland refused to accept this. He furthermore insisted
that the marriage take place as soon as possible, to avoid
Katherine's further disgrace should a child be born to her.²
Whether or not this event was planned by Buckingham, his
mother and his future bride to force Rutland's hand is
not known, but it did result in that end. The two were
married on May 16, 1620, and Williams received the
Deanery of Westminster as a reward for his valuable services.³

Buckingham's family profited from his patronage.
However, a distinction must be made between his half-
brothers and sisters, who were the issue of Sir George and
his first wife, and his full-blooded siblings, who were
the offspring of Sir George and Mary.⁴ The favorite's
full-blooded brothers and sister profited notably from
his patronage, while the only half-blooded one to achieve
some distinction was Edward Villiers. Buckingham had
two full-brothers, John and Christopher; and one full-sister,
Susan. John was a bit dull-witted, and Christopher was very
stupid and unattractive, as previously noted. It is
doubtful that either would have gone very far were it not
for their great brother. As it was, both followed very

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 133; Goodman, II, 191

² CSP Dom., 1619-23, 140.

³ DNB, XXI, 651. ⁴ See 12, above.

closely in Buckingham's steps to glory. In June, 1616, John was knighted and became Groom of the Bedchamber¹ and Master of the Robes to Prince Charles. In June, 1619, he was made Baron Villiers of Stoke, Buckinghamshire,² and Viscount Purbeck. Christopher was knighted and made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber in February, 1617.³ Later⁴ in the same year, he was made Master of the Robes. In March, 1617, the reversion of the titles Viscount Villiers, Baron Whaddon and Earl of Buckingham were granted to the favorite's full-blooded brothers, in the event that Buckingham himself should die without legitimate issue. John, the elder, was to receive the titles in such an event, and if he were to die without heirs, Christopher⁵ and his line were to receive them. The favorite was still unmarried in 1617, and by this means he ensured the succession of the noble titles within the Villiers family. Buckingham's only full-sister, Susan, had been married to Sir William Feilding, a Leicestershire gentleman, in 1607.⁶

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 373.

² CSP Dom., 1619-23, 53.

³ Elizabeth McClure Thompson, The Chamberlain Letters, (London, 1966), 178.

⁴ DNB, XX, 323.

⁵ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 446, 464.

⁶ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 446.

In September, 1622, she and her husband were elevated to the peerage, by Buckingham's influence, and became the Earl and Countess of Denbigh.¹

The only half-blooded brother of Buckingham who achieved much distinction was Edward Villiers. He was knighted in September, 1616, and became Master of the Mint in October, 1617.² In November, 1618, he was made Comptroller of the Court of Wards and Liveries.³ William, the favorite's elder half-brother, had succeeded his father as Sheriff of Leicestershire in 1605 and was made a Baronet in 1619, perhaps with Buckingham's influence.⁴ Nothing more is known about him. No information seems to exist about Buckingham's three half-sisters, Elizabeth, Anne and Frances. The favorite's step-father, Sir Thomas Compton, does not seem to have profited at all from his step-son's patronage, which may have been due to the fact that he did not get along with the Countess of Buckingham.⁵

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 446. The name may also be spelled "Feilding". William Feilding, first Earl of Denbigh, became of some importance later in Buckingham's career. He served in the expedition to Cadiz in 1625 and in the campaign at Rhe in 1627. His son, Basil Feilding, second Earl of Denbigh, was a prominent Parliamentary general during the Civil War. The biographical study by Celia, Countess of Denbigh, Royalist Father and Roundhead Son, (London, 1906), is highly commendable and covers the lives of both Earls.

² DNB, XX, 324. ³ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 598.

⁴ DNB, XX, 324; CSP Dom., 1619-23, 61.

⁵ This was widely recognized at the time and is discussed in every history written on the period.

None of Buckingham's relatives achieved great distinction or were placed in high offices. None became, for example, a judge in a high court, a Lord Chancellor or a Lord Treasurer. The loftiest appointment given to a kinsman of the favorite was the elevation of Sir Edward Villiers to the Comptrollership of the Wards. Christopher and John, as stated, received posts in the Bedchamber and the Wardrobe. These posts were not negligible in remuneration but they were far from being the loftiest positions in the realm. No other Villiers, Compton or Beaumont achieved distinctions which equalled those of Buckingham's full-brothers. A multitude may have been given knighthoods, Baronets, profitable marriages and some very minor clerical posts, but nothing worthy of mention.¹ The men who were appointed to high office under Buckingham's influence were not related to him at all. It was the favor shown towards these individuals that constituted the important aspect of Buckingham's patronage.

It is important to note that Buckingham was responsible for no lofty appointment, outside of Bacon's elevation to the

1

With the use of the Patent Rolls, it is impossible to identify individuals or estimate the number of relatives who profited from Buckingham's patronage in minor ways. The number, however, may have been considerable.

Lord Keepership, before 1618. As previously stated, the reason for this was the Howard preponderance in the administration. It is interesting to observe, however, that the favorite possessed the desire to use his power in the appointments of great officers before 1618.

There is no evidence that he was interested in influencing policy before that year,¹ and therefore there seems to be only one explanation for his desire to dabble in the fortunes of the great. The favorite was vain. Buckingham loved to exercise the power of his position. To paraphrase S. R. Gardiner's words, it must have been delightful to have held in the palm of his hand the fortunes of great men who had toiled upwards through the ranks and who, a few years ago, had greatly outranked George Villiers.² The revelation of this aspect of the favorite's mentality occurred during the events which followed the death of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere in March, 1617. Upon the death of Ellesmere, Bacon received the old man's office, as had been promised to him one year before, with the inferior title of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal.³ With Bacon's promotion, the office of Attorney-General fell vacant,

¹
See 108, below.

²
See 79, 80, above. Gardiner's opinion that Buckingham was corrupted by his elevation to power is questionable. However, Buckingham's vanity and the fascinations of his powerful position can hardly be questioned.

³
Bacon received the superior title one year later.

and James decided to give the office to Sir Henry Yelverton, who had been Solicitor-General for the past four years.

The appointment of Yelverton was one instance in which James superseded the powers of his favorite as "channel" and made his own decision regarding an appointment. The King's decision no doubt was based upon the fact that Yelverton, having been the Solicitor-General, was the man best qualified for the Attorney-Generalship. Buckingham was high in royal favor at this time, and James had no desire to irritate the favorite. However, there was one fact which James seems to have overlooked. Yelverton, having risen under the influence of the Earl of Northampton, had been a Howard client, and therefore Buckingham was not pleased with the man's appointment.¹ Furthermore, Buckingham had been offered ~~£~~10,000 for the post by Sir James Ley,² an able and experienced lawyer. Yelverton, however, received his appointment directly from the King, and boasted that "if any man wold move him to the contrarye [³oppose his appointment], he wold thinke him half a traytor." This remark was a direct slap in the face for Buckingham, and Buckingham was furious. The warrant for Yelverton's appointment was drawn up in Chancery, but it was not given directly to James for the royal signature. Because he was the now

¹ Whitelocke, 56.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 55.

accepted "channel", the warrant was given to Buckingham, and the favorite decided to block Yelverton's appointment. He refused to give the warrant to James. A few days later, Yelverton began to wonder what had happened to his warrant, and he soon discovered who was the source of the trouble. He was advised to submit to Buckingham, but he refused to bow. At length, the Privy Council became enraged at Buckingham for opposing an appointment which had been the King's wish. The favorite at last gave in, probably because he did not wish to irritate James, and he turned the document over to the monarch. The warrant was then¹ signed.

Because Yelverton had been the King's choice, Buckingham had been in an awkward position throughout the episode. However, this interesting story demonstrates the favorite's desire to control all appointments. Also, as was true of the affair concerning Roper's office, it shows that Buckingham did not always get his own way. Once again, the King had frustrated the favorite's designs, and Yelverton, who had stood up to the powerful Buckingham, did not find himself in trouble.

Through the course of a year and a half after his creation as "channel", George Villiers, Earl of Buckingham, had grown in royal favor, had enriched himself, and had built a small following at Court, based upon Lord Keeper

1

Whitelock, 56.

Bacon and some of his own kinfolk. As the events surrounding Yelverton's appointment illustrated, however, the favorite was beginning to look for ways of increasing his prestige and power even more. In 1618, he plunged his great latent power of patronage into the highest ranks of the government.

CHAPTER IV

THE FALL OF THE HOWARDS AND THE DOMINANCE OF BUCKINGHAM (1618)

At the beginning of 1618, the Howard faction was still powerful, despite the fact that it had lost Somerset two¹ years before. Several of the highest offices of state were filled either by members of the faction or by their clients. Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, was still the Lord High Admiral; Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, was still Lord Treasurer; Sir Thomas Lake still held one of the Secretaryships; William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, was Master of the Wards. Many of the lower ranking offices were filled by clients of the Howards. By occupying great offices themselves, by filling subordinate posts with their own nominees and by exerting great influence upon the King, the Howards had maintained a dominant position at Court for many years.

The Howards were odious to Buckingham. They had opposed his rise to power before the downfall of Somerset, and he must have been anxious for personal revenge. Furthermore, not one of the Howards or their creatures owed an ounce of their position to Buckingham's influence,

1

None of the Howards, outside of the Countess of Somerset, had lost favor because of the Overbury murder. Although it had lost a convenient tool in Somerset, the faction had remained in office and power.

and this must have gnawed at his great vanity. Until they were humbled or uprooted from their positions, the favorite could not hope to utilize his great power of patronage to dominate the administration.

Outside of vanity, there was another probable motive behind Buckingham's hatred of the great faction. Although it is difficult to document in precise detail, one can see that a new ambition was burning in the favorite's soul. In the four years that he had been a favorite, Buckingham had shown no apparent interest in foreign policy. He seems to have been content to dabble only in the domestic affairs of the Court, advancing the fortunes of himself, his relatives and a few friends, such as Bacon. But this world had become too small for him. In 1618, he decided to assert his influence in the sphere of foreign policy. To the consternation of Abbot, Pembroke and other members of the Protestant faction, it was becoming apparent, early in that year, that the favorite had decided to champion the proposed Spanish marriage.

The motives behind his support of the match are not perfectly clear. However, Queen Anne's prophecy, given to Abbot in 1615, may suggest the main motive. She had warned the Archbishop that a royal favorite, being a creature

of the King, would inevitably support the King's own policies. Because the Spanish match was a great dream of James, Buckingham would inevitably support the match himself. If he were to assist the King in realizing the great royal dream, even greater favors might be heaped upon him. The first solid evidence of the favorite's new interest in foreign policy was the role he played in the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh. Proof does exist that Buckingham promised Sarmiento, the Spanish ambassador, that he would use his influence to secure¹ Raleigh's death.

1

It is unnecessary to discuss Raleigh's well known voyage of 1617 in detail. For a good, brief discussion, see Willson, James VI & I, XIX. Raleigh, having been convicted of treason in 1603, had spent thirteen years awaiting execution at royal pleasure. In 1616, he was released from the Tower to sail to Guiana, in hopes of establishing English claims to rich gold deposits supposedly existent there. James, anxious to improve his income but desirous of maintaining peace with Spain, had ordered him not to attack any Spanish settlement or Spanish shipping. However, Raleigh failed to find gold and was forced by his crews to attack a Spanish town. When he returned, he was executed (spring, 1618).

Sarmiento, in his correspondence with the Spanish government, stated that Buckingham's influence had been of some importance in the final decision to execute Raleigh. (Despite James intense anger when he learned of Raleigh's failure and his attack on the Spanish settlement, there was some hesitation before the decision to execute Raleigh was made. The old admiral had long been a popular hero, and there was an outcry from the Protestant faction at Court.) Antonio Ballesteros Beretta, ed., Correspondencia Oficial de Don Diego de Sarmiento y Acuña, Conde de Gondomar, (Madrid, 1947), II, 85, 113-18, 38-40.

What was the connection between Buckingham's desire to champion the match and the overthrow of the Howards? A probable connection can be suggested if one reflects upon the nature of the favorite's personality. Because of his great conceit and ambition, he, Buckingham, must be the leading champion of the match. The difficulty here was that the Howards had been the traditional champions of the match. If Buckingham were to support the proposed marriage and yet allow the Howards to remain in power, would he not become merely another member of the Howard faction, another tool for their desires? If the match were to become a reality, credit for the achievement must go to him, and to nobody else. The Howards must go.

The influence of Buckingham was to play a leading role in the success of the purge of the great faction, but his influence alone was insufficient to effect the destruction. James, a fair and just man, would not have dismissed the Howards simply to satisfy the wishes of his favorite. Maladministration on the part of the Howards would have to be proven. It was an administrative reform movement which destroyed the edifice that the family had built for itself, and the chief engineer of this movement was Sir Lionel Cranfield, the future Earl

of Middlesex and the future Lord Treasurer of England.

A biographer of Buckingham is plagued with many deficiencies in his source material. As pointed out, there is no doubt that Buckingham wished to eliminate the Howards, but it is difficult to document his exact motives. It is equally difficult to document his activities behind the actual purge when it came. What exactly did he do to effect the destruction of his foes? Although a few details are known, this question cannot be fully answered. It is known, for example, that James, after the purge was over, imagined that a great service had been done to himself. Corruption had been eliminated from the ranks of his servants, and he praised Buckingham as the chief instrument of the reform.¹ From this, it is easy to conclude that Buckingham's influence must have been very active behind the purge. But almost everything that he actually did must have passed in a private atmosphere--in conversations between himself and James--and few records of such activity have survived. Excellent records of Cranfield's activities have survived, but Buckingham never sat on any of Cranfield's committees. Thus, one can only conclude that Buckingham must have acted as a kind of vital link, a link of influence, between Cranfield and the King.

1

Willson, 397.

The administrative reform movement which destroyed the Howard predominance sought to do something about the great royal debt, and here, attention must be directed towards one of the causes of the debt: administrative corruption. In 1618, one of the basic arguments of the financial reformers was that profiteering in office had deprived the King of large amounts of money and thus had contributed greatly to the enormous debt. It was the Howard party, dominant as it was in the administration, which became the chief culprit in this corruption. There was considerable abuse in almost every department of the government which they dominated.

Although it is impossible to discover any misconduct on the part of Lord High Admiral Nottingham himself, the Jacobean navy presents a rather shocking picture. Corruption had crept in under Nottingham, and the basic factor here was the Lord High Admiral's senility. At the accession of James in 1603, he was sixty-seven, which, in the seventeenth century, was already a ripe old age. In 1618, when his administration was investigated, he was eighty-two. The dim-wittedness, lack of energy and frequent illness of old age had made Nottingham blind to the activities of many of his subordinates.

In 1604, Sir Robert Mansell, a Howard client, had become Treasurer of the Navy, and in 1612, one Sir Allan

Apsley had been made Victualler, the official in charge of supply. Both Mansell and Apsley, along with numerous officials under them, were extremely corrupt. In fact, it is amazing that they continued in office as long as they did, because their activities were well known at Court long before 1618. In 1608, a commission had found Mansell guilty of pocketing £12,000 by profiteering in naval stores and of embezzling £1,000 in wages during one year only. James simply had said that he hoped things would improve in the future. A similar attack on Mansell¹ in 1613 had also ended in failure.

Mansell and his colleagues had attempted to be very subtle in their graft, particularly in regard to material used in ships. Wood gradually decomposes in exposure to air and water, and the hulls of wooded ships required frequent repairs. Under Mansell, repairs often were completely ignored for long periods of time. Even when orders were given for fresh planking, prime oak timber cut for the purpose was frequently confiscated by corrupt Admiralty officials and sold for their personal profit. A poor quality of wood was then used. Thus, any

1

M. Oppenheim, A History of the Administration of the Royal Navy and of Merchant Shipping in Relation to the Navy (1547-1660), (London, 1961), 193.

repairs which were made were of very poor quality. A more specific example of Admiralty graft, discovered by Cranfield in 1618, was in the matter of cordage-- the rigging used on ships. In 1602, before widespread graft had crept in (i.e. before Mansell's appointment) a cable of 16½ inches diameter contained 190 strands of sturdy hemp. In 1608, a larger cable of nineteen inches diameter had only 135 strands and a considerable amount of cheap tarring.¹

Graft was also rife in the victualling and paying of seamen. Common seamen, poorly paid and equipped because of the peculation, suffered poverty and disease, which in turn led to a very low state of morale. Some sea captains, able to ingratiate themselves with the corrupt administration, had been drawn into the abuse. Many captains went to sea with only half a complement, but with full pay for a full crew. Others remained idle at home when they should have been at sea.²

In addition to graft, a large number of useless offices had been created for friends and relatives of the corrupt

¹ Oppenheim, 198.

² Ibid., 187 ff.

Admiralty officers. An outstanding example of such a post was the "Keeper of the Store at Woolwich", which drew £ 78 per year in salary and which was absolutely useless. A similar office had been created at Deptford, where the "Keeper" had been able to build a house costing £500.¹ The general condition of the navy can be summarized very simply. It was appalling.

Similar conditions existed in the Household, the department which supervised supplies for the royal family and the ceremonies and entertainments of the royal Court. Before he became Lord Treasurer in 1614, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, had been the Lord Chamberlain, and as such he had been in charge of an important section² of the Household known as the Chamber. In James' opinion, Suffolk was a "plain, honest gentleman, who, if he committed a fault, had not rhetoric enough to excuse it."³

¹ Oppenheim, 191.

² The Chamber, also known as the "Household above stairs", was one of two divisions of the Household. The second section was known as the "Household below stairs", and was supervised by the Lord Steward. The Chamber, in general, was in charge of the ceremonies and entertainments of the Court, while the latter supervised supply. Aylmer, Servants, 26, 27, 29.

³ Birch, I, 335-6.

James did not know what had been going on, because Suffolk, as Lord Chamberlain, had been very corrupt. In 1602, he had been joined in the Household by William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, who was appointed Treasurer of the Household.¹ Wallingford is considered to have been an honest man personally, but he must have been a careless administrator and he must have winked at Suffolk's abuses.² Also, in 1605, he married Suffolk's second daughter, Elizabeth, and thus came to have close attachments to the Howard family. In 1614, after Suffolk's elevation to the Treasurership, Somerset was made Lord Chamberlain, and it is evident that the poor conditions in the Chamber were perpetuated.³

In addition to the outright graft of Suffolk and others, the Household suffered from very sloppy administration. Part of the blame here must be assigned to Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox, who had been appointed Lord Steward shortly after James' coronation.⁴ Lennox received his appointment entirely because of his friendship with James, not because

¹ The Treasurer was a subordinate of the Lord Chamberlain. However, he did have certain duties "below stairs". Aylmer, Servants, 26, 27, 29.

² Menna Prestwich, Lionel Cranfield--Profit and Politics under the Early Stuarts, (Oxford, 1967), 3-4.

³ Ibid.⁴ Willson, 26, 175.

of Howard influence. Thus, he was not a member of the Howard faction, properly speaking. However, he maintained cordial relations with the faction and thus he became identified with the maladministration of the times. Under Lennox' lax supervision, overstaffing and petty graft¹ became a major problem in the lower ranks of the Household. Partly because of James' high living but also because of thoughtlessness in hiring, the staff of the Household increased to an enormous size. Furthermore, every person who worked there received free meals. This was an ancient custom, but in the reign of James, before 1618, the employees indulged in uncustomarily lavish diets. Graft on the part of low ranking employees also became a serious drain of money. By 1618, for example, hundreds of prime carcasses of beef and mutton had been stolen from the royal² larders.

From 1608, the Mastership of the Wardrobe was filled,³ successively, by another two of James' Scottish friends. Like Lennox, these men received their appointments because of royal favor and they were not Howard clients. However,

¹ Goodman, I, 320-21.

² Prestwich, 208.

³ As the name itself indicates, the Wardrobe was the department which supervised the clothing of the royal family. As such, it was in charge of many costly garments and jewels.

like Lennox, they maintained friendly relations with the Howards. George Hume, Earl of Dunbar, held the office from 1608 to 1613. Dunbar was very corrupt, and his graft seems to have escaped the notice of James.¹ James Hay, later Viscount Doncaster and Earl of Carlisle, filled the post from 1613. Hay, although not really corrupt, was an absolute contradiction to the adage usually applied to Scots. He has been considered the most extravagant character who ever walked on the Jacobean stage. In the Wardrobe, he was a hopeless spendthrift, and he cost the King a great deal of money.²

In 1612, after the death of Salisbury, James resolved to reform the finances of his government and to devote more of his time to personal supervision of financial matters. This resolution, however, was very short-lived and the existent corruption was not discovered, despite the fact that the Treasury, one of Salisbury's former offices, was put in commission for two years. The Howards were still too powerful, and they still had the able leadership of the crafty Earl of Northampton. Northampton, who became the leading figure on the Treasury commission, placed the attempted reform movement entirely into Howard

¹ Prestwich, 15.

² Ibid., 161.

hands. One result of this was that the Howards actually rose in administrative power, because the offices of Lord Treasurer, Secretary (i.e. one of the Secretaryships) and Master of the Wards, once held by Salisbury, were given to them. Also, Northampton generated several years' discussion and trial of senseless revenue projects, which diverted attention away from administrative corruption and which, in some instances, did great harm.¹

1614 saw the Howards greatly advance themselves in administrative power.² Wallingford, for example, became a pluralist when he was given the Mastership of the

1

The two most notable revenue projects tried at this time were Sir Arthur Ingram's alum project and the notorious scheme of Sir William Cockayne, an alderman of London. Ingram, an unscrupulous merchant who had been associated with Cranfield early in the century, proposed in 1613 that the Crown invest in his alum works and receive a huge profit in return. As it happened, however, the alum works failed and the Crown lost its large investment (approx. £12,000). Under Cockayne's scheme of 1615, the English were to export dyed woolen cloth instead of the traditional undyed product. The dyed cloth, Cockayne argued, would fetch a much higher price abroad and the duties charged by the Crown on cloth export could be much higher. As it was, however, the cloth failed to sell, largely because of Dutch opposition (the Dutch had traditionally dyed much English cloth). Not only did the Crown fail to receive additional duties, but the entire English cloth industry suffered a brief but severe depression.

2

It may be added that 1614 saw Somerset, associated as he was with the faction, at the height of his career.

Wards. He was no more dishonest in the Wards than he had been in the Household, but, as events were to prove, his association with the Howards was the seed of his downfall.¹

Suffolk, that "plain, honest gentleman" was appointed Lord Treasurer in the same year. Not long after he received the office, the Earl secured the appointment of one Sir John Bingley as Auditor of the Exchequer.² Suffolk struck an interesting bargain with Bingley. Unless a cash bribe or some other treat was given to Bingley or Suffolk, no payment to a private individual was authorized by the Treasury.³ At times, persons were forced to bribe the pair in order to perform their duties in the King's service. For example, Lord Ridgeway, an army officer, had to pay the enormous sum of £11,200 per year in order to appropriate funds for the army in Ireland.⁴ With Bingley's assistance, accounts were deliberately muddled or falsified to conceal this fantastic bribery. It is interesting to note that the

¹ Frederick C. Dietz, English Public Finance, 1558-1641,
² (New York, 1932), 171.

As Auditor of the Exchequer, Bingley held great responsibilities regarding the auditing of Treasury and Exchequer accounts. It should be pointed out here that Fulke Greville, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was a member of the Protestant party and was not associated with Howard corruption.

³ As a rule, payments from the Crown came out of the Treasury, not the Exchequer.

⁴ Dietz, 171.

Countess of Suffolk became involved in the bribery.

When Suffolk appeared unwilling to grant money unless large bribes were paid, men developed the habit of going to her, as a source of influence upon her husband. She soon became¹ as notorious as her spouse for taking bribes.

The spring of 1616 saw the Howard predominance weakened when Somerset was convicted of complicity in murder. A valuable instrument of influence was lost. Somerset's Secretaryship, however, was soon filled by Sir Thomas Lake, another associate of the family. With the death of Sir Ralph Winwood, James' other Secretary,² in October, 1617, Lake was alone as Secretary. Thus, for a brief period, the Secretaryship was entirely in Howard hands.

1

Willson, 395. The Countess of Suffolk, like her daughters, Frances and Elizabeth, was considered one of the vilest females of the Jacobean Court.

2

It may seem strange that Sir Ralph Winwood, a staunch adherent of the Protestant faction, had been made a Secretary alongside Somerset. Actually, the origins of his receipt of the office are to be found in the year 1612, before the split between "Protestants" and "Catholics" existed at Court. Somerset at that time was courting Frances Howard, and thus he was not actually a tool of the Howards at that time. Winwood adopted Somerset as a patron, and received his Secretaryship in 1614 because of Somerset's influence. After that, Winwood dropped Somerset's patronage and became an arch enemy of the Howards.

Such was the position of the Howard party in the period preceding 1618. The Treasury, the Admiralty, the Household and the Secretaryship were dominated by them. Despite the loss of Somerset, they were still high in royal favor and they were still influential with the King. They were opposed by another faction at Court, but the "Protestants" had not been able to remove them from power. In 1618, however, the instrument of their destruction came to light.

Sir Lionel Cranfield, the future Earl of Middlesex and the future Lord Treasurer of England, is considered one of the greatest financial wizards of Stuart times. He was scrupulous as well as brilliant, but he was not a likeable personality. He tended to be cold and uncompromising, and his efficiency, although it produced outstanding results, was manifested in a passion for detail,¹ which tended to make him dull. He had started out in life as a London cloth merchant, but he became known to the Howards through the connections of his business partner,² Sir Arthur Ingram. In 1612, he adopted Northampton as his patron, and the crafty Earl used Cranfield's business acumen to further the interests of the Howards. James, at that time,

¹ Prestwich, I, passim.

² Ibid.; Richard Tawney, Politics and Business during the Reign of James I, (Cambridge, 1958), 70. Tawney's treatment of Cranfield was not as valuable as Prestwich's recent biography.

was pursuing his fruitless revenue projects, and Cranfield, at Northampton's instigation, proposed several minor ways of increasing the yield of the customs. Thus, unintentionally, Cranfield contributed to Northampton's red-herring scheme of diverting attention away from the possibilities of administrative reform.¹ As a reward for his services, he² was made Surveyor-General of the Customs and was knighted. It did not take him long, however, to discover the corruption of his patrons. Furthermore, when he received his Surveyorship of the Customs, he had also set his eyes on the office of³ Cofferer, a lucrative Treasury post. He failed to get the office, and Cranfield soon dropped the Howards as patrons. Not only were the Howards dishonest, which must have irritated a man of Cranfield's temperament, but, after 1612, they neglected him.

In 1614, Cranfield first proposed administrative reform⁴ as a means of alleviating the King's bad financial position.

1

Prestwich, III, passim. Cranfield must have been unaware of the precise nature of Howard misconduct. Logically, a man of his personality would not have supported corruption.

2

The Surveyor-General of the Customs was the overall supervisor of the collection of customs duties. He was responsible to the Lord Treasurer.

3

Prestwich, 172.

4

Ibid., 180; Spedding, V, 187-88. This was proposed in private correspondence with Bacon.

In 1615, he openly joined the Protestant party, and in 1616, he attached himself to Buckingham.¹ In November, 1616, he was made one of the Masters of Requests.² Through these years, Cranfield secretly developed the idea of governmental reform, and he made his proposals known to Bacon, Buckingham and other anti-Howard men.

By late 1617, the King's debts totalled £726,000,³ and even James was ready to listen to Cranfield's ideas. The red-herring schemes had either failed to produce sufficient new revenue or, in the cases of Cockayne's and Ingram's projects, had ended in disaster.⁴ In reality, there was only one alternative to novel revenue projects. If no satisfactory way of bringing in new money could be found, then it was necessary to find ways of saving money in the existent financial and administrative structure, and this would necessitate investigation of the spending habits of the officialdom. Thus, with the failure of the revenue schemes, the Howards found themselves in a hopeless position.

¹ Prestwich, 196. The first thing that happened in the relationship was Cranfield's offer to pay Roper for his office, on Buckingham's behalf (see 75, 76, 78, above).

² CSP Dom., 1611-18, 406, 448.

³ Ibid., 510.

⁴ It must be pointed out that Cranfield and Ingram were not associated after the failure of the alum project.

To provide a detailed examination of the administration, Cranfield proposed that a sub-committee of the Privy Council, staffed only by financial experts, be appointed. James, at Buckingham's instigation, approved the recommendation and Bacon was appointed to draft the detailed terms of the sub-committee.¹ Because the self-interest of the Howard faction obviously would be the major obstacle to reform, it was imperative that the underlying purpose of the sub-committee be kept as secret as possible and that no member of the Howard party be appointed to the sub-committee. With this in mind, Bacon proposed that the Council nominate men from the customs-houses and the Exchequer as nominees for committee members. The King then would make the final choice from among these nominees.² The Treasury, dominated by Suffolk, and the Council itself, containing all of the greatest members of the faction, were to be avoided³ in making the list of nominees. If several Council members were nominated and the Howards were avoided, the family would be both offended and alarmed. Bacon made the excuse

¹ Spedding, VI, 277-83. ² Ibid.

³ Many Councillors were anti-Howard men. It would be incorrect to say that the Howards dominated the Council. However, all of the great office holders were members.

that Councillors would find the work of the sub-committee¹ too dull, and that they might get bogged down in debate. James accepted Bacon's proposals and the final selection,² made late in November, 1617, was very pleasing to Cranfield.

Early in 1618, a startling event occurred which brought Buckingham and the Howards into head-on collision. The Howards must have felt the approach of doom and they must have known that Buckingham was plotting their ruin, because in February of that year they introduced the son³ of Sir William Monson to Court. Young Monson was a handsome lad, and the Howards hoped that he could be a successful rival to Buckingham, as Buckingham himself had been to Somerset. They made the youth wash his face⁴ with curds each day and waited hopefully for the result. To their utter disappointment, James disapproved of this "second Somerset". He was very closely attached to Buckingham

¹ Spedding, VI, 277-83.

² The men appointed were Sir Francis Grafton, Sir Richard Sutton, William Pitt, John Osborne and Richard Weston. Cranfield, of course, was to preside. Outside of Richard Weston, who later became the Lord Treasurer of Charles I, none of these men were ever to possess much individual fame.

³ Sir William Monson had participated in the Overbury murder (see p. 31, above).

⁴ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 524. The application of curds was considered a beauty treatment.

by this time and he may have perceived the intended threat to his favorite. Furthermore, he was not going to show favor to the son of a convicted murderer. So he ordered Monson to leave the Court.¹ Monson was brought back in March, but without success, and James became enraged at the Howards. Buckingham had nothing to fear from Monson, but he seems to have regarded the episode as a direct challenge to himself, and he became even more zealous in his plot to ruin the Howards. The downfall of the faction came swiftly during and after the appearance of Monson.

Cranfield's sub-committee began its work early in 1618. While Buckingham was contending with Monson, the financial reformers were discovering the waste which had been occurring in the Household. By June, the investigation of this department was finished, and Cranfield recommended drastic reduction of expenditure in the Household, principally in the victualling of the employees. Nobody was dismissed at this time. Cranfield was able, in the end, to recommend a saving of ~~£~~18,000 in the Household, which² was tried with considerable success.

1

CSP Dom., 1611-18, 534.

2

Prestwich, 209.

After the uncovering of the evils in the Household, the entire administration became subject to investigation. In March, while the Household was still being scrutinized, the Auditor of the Exchequer and the officials of the Court of Wards were ordered to present their accounts for 1617.¹ The sub-committee did not take long to discover the corruption of Suffolk and Bingley. Although Suffolk was not actually put on trial for his misconduct until 1619, he was dismissed from his Treasurership in July of 1618. The reformers did not even have to recommend the dismissal of Bingley. In March, when he was ordered to present his records, the Auditor of the Exchequer promptly resigned and left London.² Upon the downfall of Suffolk and Bingley, the Treasury was put in commission, and Suffolk's misconduct was uncovered in even greater detail.³ Eventually, it was decided to bring him to trial to provide an example for future Lord Treasurers.⁴ Despite his apparent reluctance

¹ Rather than investigate department by department, Cranfield and his colleagues investigated several departments at once. The accounts of the Auditor of the Exchequer provided a means of investigating the Treasury.

² CSP Dom., 1611-18, 587.

³ The commissioners were Abbot, Bacon, Sir Fulke Greville (Chancellor of the Exchequer), Sir Robert Naunton, Sir Julius Caesar and Sir Edward Coke.

⁴ Spedding, VII, 2-3.

to penalize a member of a family which he had loved so well, James eventually agreed to bring Suffolk before the Star Chamber. The trial, held in November, 1619, saw a massive volume of evidence brought against the Earl--most of it, of course, was the truth. Outside of outright graft on the part of Suffolk, his wife and Bingley, collaboration with other corrupt officials, such as Mansell in the Admiralty, constituted a major charge.¹ As noted above, the three had impeded the conveyance of funds to both the navy and army in Ireland. During the trial, it was discovered that the forces in Ireland were on the verge of mutiny because of arrears in pay.² In the end, Suffolk was fined £30,000 and was banished from the Court. Bingley was imprisoned and fined £2,000.³ Suffolk never again became noticeable in public life.

While the Household and Treasury were being probed, Cranfield was directing attention to the Wardrobe. Late in 1617, the extravagant Hay, Master of the Wardrobe, had sensed the oncoming housecleaning and had declared that he could operate the Wardrobe at £28,000 per year. This was,

¹ Prestwich, 221.

² Ibid., 721-22.

³ Ibid., 729.

in fact, a notable saving on the part of Hay, but early in¹ 1618, Cranfield offered to run the department at £20,000. In September, James sadly dismissed Hay and appointed Cranfield in his place. Cranfield introduced a completely new system of accounting, reduced expenditures drastically, and dismissed a great number of Wardrobe employees. He did indeed keep his promise of maintaining the department² at £20,000 per year. Regarding Cranfield's appointment, it seems certain that Buckingham was behind it. It must be remembered that James Hay was dearly loved by James and therefore the decision to dismiss him may have originated from some source other than James. As noted previously, Cranfield was anxious to improve his own fortunes, and Buckingham knew how to treat men who were useful to him.

William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, Master of the Wards, was not removed in the same way that Suffolk or Hay were removed. Wallingford, as discussed, is considered³ a lax administrator, but he was not a dishonest man, and this fact may have caused Buckingham a great deal of

¹ Prestwich, 228.

² Ibid., 230

³ It was argued at the time that the Wards were not yielding maximum revenues to the Crown. Dietz, 171.

frustration. There were, however, three vulnerable spots in Wallingford's armor. First, he was an office-holding client of the Howards, who were now falling into general disrepute; secondly, along with the rest of his faction, he had backed Monson early in the year, which had irritated James as well as Buckingham; thirdly, he was married to Elizabeth, née Howard, who, if not as cold-blooded as her sister, Frances, at least had a very offensive tongue. When her father, Suffolk, was dismissed in July, Elizabeth, only too well aware of the undercurrents at Court, lost her temper and loudly accused Buckingham of ruining her family by underhanded means. James, furious at this accusation, announced that he would not be served by the husband of such a woman. In December, Wallingford was dismissed.¹ In the following month, Cranfield was created Master of the Wards and maintained himself in the office with his usual efficiency and scrupulousness. The dismissal of Wallingford must have been due almost entirely to the influence of Buckingham. James, of course, would have been furious at any unkind remark directed at his favorite, but it was Wallingford's wife, temperamentally different from her husband, who had committed the offense. Logically,

¹

CSP Dom., 1611-18, 573.

then, it should have been her who was punished, perhaps by banishment from the Court until tempers had cooled. James himself had no clear reason to dismiss an honest servant like Wallingford. One might also reflect upon his reluctance to bring Suffolk to trial: he had no strong inclination to ruin the Howards whom he had favored for so many years. Only Buckingham, desiring the elimination of the entire faction, had reason to want Wallingford's dismissal.

There is a notable peculiarity in the downfall of Sir Thomas Lake, Secretary of State, in that there is evidence which strongly suggests that Lake, perhaps sensing the oncoming purge, abandoned the Howard faction late in 1617.¹ Buckingham's exact attitudes towards Lake's apostasy are not known, but it is certain that the favorite could have done little to save Lake from his doom, even if he had decided to adopt the Secretary as a client. Unlike those of other Howard office-holders, the fall of Lake was not associated with administrative evils. Instead, Sir Thomas and his family became embroiled in a quarrel with the Cecil family, which emerged as one of the most spectacular scandals of the times.

¹

See 137, below.

Early in 1616, Lake had married his daughter, Anne, to William Cecil, Lord Roos, grandson and heir of Thomas Cecil, Earl of Exeter.¹ Both Anne and her mother, Lady Lake, were unprincipled women. As one observer was prompted to write: "she [Anne] is described and pointed out as a very pert lady, and is said to domineer as much over her mother, as her mother doeth over some others."² A year after the marriage, Roos was planning to join an embassy to Spain, and Lake tried to force him to turn over one of his estates to Anne, threatening that Roos would receive no money from the Treasury to cover his embassy costs unless the demand were met. When Roos refused, his wife threatened him with divorce, and the young nobleman was further intimidated by being openly attacked on the streets by friends of the Lakes. He at last gave in, and before going to Madrid he commenced the legal steps which would have placed the estate in Anne's hands.

At this point, however, the aged Earl of Exeter intervened and blocked the transference of the property. For various reasons, Exeter's consent was needed for the formal agreement and he refused to give it. Roos could not

1

Exeter was the brother of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, and the son of the famous Burleigh.

2

Birch, II, 70.

change his grandfather's mind, despite repeated threats he received from his wife and the Lakes. Eventually, Roos could stand no more, and in the autumn of 1617, he¹ escaped to Italy, stealing much of his wife's jewelry. The terrible Lady Roos now had no choice but to turn her attention to Exeter.

Exeter was married to a beautiful young woman, Frances, daughter of one William Brydges, whom Lady Roos² had personally despised for a long time. Lady Roos accused Lady Exeter of having extramarital relations with Roos and of attempting to poison both Sir Thomas Lake and herself. She procured a great deal of completely false evidence to back up her accusation. In January, 1618, the Exeters decided to fight it out with the Lakes and³ they brought the matter before the King.

It soon became apparent that the unscrupulous Lady Roos and her parents had gone too far. All the evidence that Lady Roos had created was piece by piece proven to be false. By the summer of 1618, when the rest of the Howard association was crumbling, the Lakes found the tables turned on them, because the Exeters decided to bring them to trial for slander. In June, James ordered Roos back to England, but the unfortunate young man died before the royal order

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 462; Birch, II, 83.

² CSP Dom., 1611-18, 512, 514. ³ Ibid., 136, 196.

even reached him.¹ The trials of the Lakes dragged on until February, 1619. In the public eye, Lady Roos was the chief guilty party, but her father and mother could not be held guiltless. Lady Lake had propagated her daughter's slander, and Lake had used his official influence to imprison several servants of the Exeters, forcing them to testify falsely when their masters were accused of the poison attempt.² The Court of Star Chamber found all three guilty in varying degrees, and when the sentences were passed, James, forever fond of Biblical allusions, compared Lady Roos to the serpent in the Garden of Eden, her mother to Eve, and her father to Adam.³ Lake was dismissed from office and he and his wife were to be fined⁴ £5,000 each. Lady Roos was to be fined twice that sum.

Even if Buckingham had decided to respect the ex-Secretary's abandonment of the Howards, it was plain enough that Lake was of little use to him after the scandal had been revealed in court. Although any part Buckingham may have played during the trials has not been recorded, one can catch glimpses of interesting goings-on after the

¹ Birch, II, 83.

² Ibid., 136, 196.

³ Ibid., 135.

⁴ Ibid.

sentences had been passed on the Lakes. In January, 1619, shortly before the trials ended, Buckingham visited the defendants in prison.¹ Soon after the sentences had been passed, James declared that the penalties would be drastically reduced if the guilty parties would confess and offer penance. Gradually, the Lakes were brought to confess,² and their fines were reduced to a total of £10,200.² What had happened? Perhaps Buckingham had promised Sir Thomas that he would use his influence with James to reduce the sentences in return for a handsome gratuity from Lake. Contemporary observers suspected that the favorite's influence was at work. As Sir John Chamberlain, the most eloquent observer of the times, wrote: "the Lakes' business, it is thought, will receive a more favorable issue than was imagined. The Marquis was, within these few days, at this house, to visit him; whereupon men frame and build conjectures."³ Further support for this speculation may be derived from the fact that the widowed Lady Roos married Endymion Porter, one of Buckingham's servants, in May, 1619,⁴ shortly after she confessed and offered penance.

¹ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 19ff; Birch, II, 120.

² CSP Dom., 1619-23, 68. ³ Birch, II, 120.

⁴ CSP Dom., 1619-23, 47.

The departmental reform which became of greatest importance to Buckingham personally was the investigation of the Admiralty. It was this particular investigation that led to his appointment as Lord High Admiral of England. Considerable incentive for an investigation of the Admiralty was provided late in 1617 by a mistake made by Sir Robert Mansell, Treasurer of the Navy. In November of that year, Mansell announced that he had a scheme which would save the Admiralty £7,000 per year in the future. He was given £10,000 from the Treasury to implement his "plan". Apparently unaware that the trumpet of judgment was about to be sounded, Mansell pocketed most of the £10,000. Sir Thomas Lake, apparently abandoning the Howard party,¹ reported the incident to Buckingham. In March, 1618, Mansell was ordered to present his records for the past² two years.

To provide additional experience on the sub-committee, Cranfield had two naval experts appointed for the investigation of the Admiralty. One was Sir Thomas Smythe, Chairman of the East India Company, and the other was John Coke, who became

¹ George M. Fortescue, "The Fortescue Papers", Camden Society, ed. S. R. Gardiner, (reprinted, New York, 1965), I, 31.

² CSP Dom., 1611-18, 559.

a valuable servant to Buckingham in later years.¹ The committee soon discovered the abuses perpetrated by Mansell and others for so many years. In May, Mansell, unable to stand the pressure any longer, resigned his post. In the months following, numerous petty officials² who had been involved in the corruption were dismissed. In July, John Coke forwarded a preliminary survey to the Council, stating that out of the forty-three ships which comprised the Royal Navy, fourteen were unserviceable and three, although fit for duty, were in desperate need of repair.³ In other words, about one third of the fleet was fit only for firewood. In September, a second report was forwarded, more detailed than the first, which stated estimates for bringing the fleet back up to Elizabethan standards.⁴ Having shocked the King and the entire nation with their discoveries, the housecleaners proceeded to ponder the fate of Lord High Admiral Nottingham.

As previously stated, the major weakness of Nottingham was not corruption but senility. It was said that even at the time of the Armada Nottingham had been somewhat careless and a little too trusting as an administrator.⁵ But the most obvious fact in 1618 was his extreme age

¹ Besides serving on the naval commission, Coke sat as a member of the House of Commons and acted as a "spy" for Buckingham during the stormy Parliaments of the 1620's.

² Oppenheim, 195. ³ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 559. ⁴ Ibid., 580.

⁵ Oppenheim, 189.

which the committee members decided rendered him unfit for duty. It must be pointed out, however, that the incapacity of the old man, although of interest to a conscientious public servant like Cranfield, was of little concern to a self-seeking favorite like Buckingham. Buckingham wanted a clean sweep of the Howards, and this included the venerable Lord High Admiral.

The reasons why the favorite wished to occupy the High Admiralship are not perfectly clear. He was ill suited to the job, having had not a moment of experience at sea, but it should be noted that it was customary in this period of English history, as it was later, to give all responsible appointments in the navy to influential landed gentlemen and not to rankless commoners, regardless of experience. Also, the sub-committee had another reason for wishing Buckingham to be elevated to the High Admiralship. Because of his great influence, Buckingham would provide the ideal means of facilitating badly needed reforms in the navy. It is very interesting to note that when this appointment was first proposed, Buckingham refused, pleading youth and inexperience.¹ This may have been an empty gesture, because he seems to have shown no hesitation when he finally began to bargain with Nottingham for the office.

¹
Oppenheim, 195 ff.

Nottingham's honesty as an official and his great fame as an Elizabethan military hero created a problem for Buckingham and the sub-committee. The old man hardly could be brought to trial or dismissed for bad conduct. The only recourse open to the purgers was to persuade the old Admiral to resign and offer him a generous sum of money. This worked very well. Although innocent of corruption himself, Nottingham could hardly have escaped some whispered criticism at Court. Having witnessed the complete disgrace of the officials whom he had appointed and who had worked under him for so many years, Nottingham must have felt very melancholy. Early in October, Buckingham became co-Admiral along with Nottingham, and Nottingham received, from the Crown, a large lump sum, a pension of £3,000¹ per year, £1,000 for his wife and £500 for his heir. In February, 1619, the final bargain was struck. Buckingham received the entire Lord High Admiralship in return for the gift of another £1,000 and £1,000 per annum pension to Nottingham.² Nottingham retired into obscurity and died in 1624.

¹ CSP Dom., 1611-18, 582, 586.

² CSP Dom., 1619-23, 11. This was given by the Crown and did not come out of Buckingham's pocket. The office cost the favorite nothing.

So it was that the favorite received his loftiest official appointment. He was not, however, to be encumbered with the active responsibilities of the High Admiralship. Only a few days after his reception of the office, a permanent naval commission was established to deal with the detailed administrative work. Prominent on the commission were Sir Richard Weston, the future Lord Treasurer of Charles I, John Coke and Cranfield. The commissioners were to be responsible to the Lord High Admiral, technically speaking. It was they, not Buckingham, however, who did all of the work, including the formulation of major¹ decisions. In October, 1618, when the first bargain had been made between Nottingham and Buckingham, the sub-committee had boasted that it could operate the navy on £30,000 per year instead of £56,000, which had been the average annual expenditure under Nottingham, and still build² two new ships each year. The commission of 1619, which included many members of the old sub-committee, made good its promise, for several years at any rate. However, the underlying weakness of the Jacobean administration was not eliminated. Without proper and competent supervision from the King, no reform could become permanent. Graft again crept into the Admiralty, even into the ranks of the commission.

¹ Oppenheim, 195 ff.

² CSP Dom., 1611-18, 586.

In 1625, when the ships of England once again set out to war against Spain, the fleet was little better than it had been in 1618, when Nottingham and Mansell resigned. The ships themselves were in better repair than in 1618,¹ but conditions for the seamen had not improved at all.¹ Cranfield, had he been allowed much greater authority in the naval commission, might have been the best possible plug to hold back the waters of decay. But Cranfield was only one of many commissioners appointed in 1619, and he knew nothing about ships and seafaring.

Although the High Admiralship was the loftiest official appointment Buckingham ever received, his reception of the position was by far the most insignificant gain that he made in 1618. The ruins of the Howard administration lay before him. The executive powers of the Kingdom, outside of the office of the King itself, were almost entirely his to rebuild as he pleased. Having control of all channels of communication with the King, having control of all Crown patronage, he was in a position to appoint, in place of the fallen Howards, men of his own choosing--men who had bowed before him to achieve advancement, men who would, he hoped, at least not oppose his grandiose

1

See Oppenheim, 195 ff. for a discussion of the navy after 1619. The Cadiz expedition of 1625 is beyond the scope of this thesis.

desires for personal material gain and personal glory.

In 1617, Francis Bacon had been created Lord Keeper. It has also been noted that Cranfield was made Master of the Wardrobe and Master of the Wards, replacing James Hay and Viscount Wallingford, respectively. Buckingham himself was in full possession of the office of Lord High Admiral early in 1619. During and after the purge of the Howards, two new men appeared in the high official ranks: both were clients of the favorite. After the death of Winwood, Lake had been the only Secretary for a short period. In January, 1618, he was joined by Sir Robert Naunton. When Lake fell, he was replaced by George Calvert, the future Lord Baltimore. The Treasurership was occupied by Archbishop Abbot for a short period after the dissolution of the commission in 1619 and in 1620, it was even more briefly held by Sir Henry Montague, who had replaced Sir Edward Coke as Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1617. In 1621, the white¹ staff of the Treasury was given to Sir Lionel Cranfield. With these appointments, Buckingham dominated the government.

Something now should be said about Naunton and Calvert, who appeared in the lofty administrative ranks in 1618. Naunton, who had once been attached to the rebellious

¹ The white staff was the symbol of the office of Lord Treasurer.

Earl of Essex, earned some attention in the first Parliament of James (1604-1611), when he vigorously defended royal views and policies. He became attached to Buckingham in 1616, and was made one of the Masters of Requests. In January, 1618, he became Secretary, along with Lake.¹

George Calvert, the future Lord Baltimore, is noted chiefly in history as the founder of the Maryland colony in America. His first appearance in government was as a secretary to Salisbury. In 1608, he was made one of the Clerks of the Council, and in 1617, he was knighted.

At some time before 1618, he became associated with the favorite, and it was Buckingham's influence which led to his appointment as Secretary in February, 1619, after Lake's dismissal. With Calvert's elevation, Buckingham had control of both offices of Secretary.² It was said at the time that both men were relatively quiet personalities, perhaps somewhat lacking in initiative, who could be expected to fill their posts in a functional manner. Thus, they seemed admirably suited for the purposes of Buckingham, who wished to pull the puppet strings of government himself.³

¹ DNB, XIX, 127 ff.

² DNB, III, 721 ff.

³ Birch, II, 123.

By the end of the year 1618, the period of Buckingham's rise to power was over. Not only did he possess great latent power over patronage, but he actually had control of most of the great offices in the Kingdom. Possessing a solid entrenchment in the government, he then proceeded to extend his great influence into the broader sphere of foreign policy and international relations.

EPILOGUE

Through the course of four and a half years, George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, had risen from obscurity to become the second most politically powerful man in England. He had achieved this lofty position basically because of his ability to attract the King: he possessed no other qualifications. During this brief period he had been confronted with two impediments which, largely by his good fortune but partly by his own skill, had been removed. In the earliest stage of his rise, the Earl of Somerset had tried to block his path. Somerset, however, had been convicted of complicity in murder in 1616, and with his blockade out of the way, Villiers became the sole favorite of the King. He then became the "channel" of James, a role which Somerset had once filled, with great latent power over patronage and policy-making. With this power, he began to build up a faction of his own at Court, consisting at first of Sir Francis Bacon and some of his own relatives. Before 1618, however, he could not eliminate the second and greatest of the obstacles: the Howard preponderance in the government. Only by championing a reform movement directed against the Howard office-holders had he removed this impediment to his fortunes. When the Howards had been purged from their position of power, Buckingham filled their former positions with his own clients, and thus he created a

faction which was dominant in the government and which, he hoped, would abet his interests and designs. With the triumph of the Buckingham faction, the period of the favorite's rise to power had come to an end, and Buckingham was solidly entrenched in royal favor and bureaucratic power.

The total achievement was astounding, but 1618 did not see Buckingham at his zenith. This was to come in the years 1623 and 1624, with the climax and then the complete breakdown of the proposed marriage alliance with Spain. In 1619 and 1620, the seemingly endless negotiations for the match received a completely new light with the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War in Germany. In these two years, James son-in-law, the Elector Frederick of the Palatinate,¹ was offered the Bohemian throne by a group of Protestant rebels, was defeated in Bohemia by the Habsburgs, and was then driven out of his proper territorial possessions. James, clinging to his policy of pacifism, renewed the proposed Spanish marriage negotiations with even greater vigor, hoping that a formalized alliance with Spain would prompt Philip III to see to it that Frederick received back his Palatinate. Buckingham remained the champion of the proposed marriage, swinging to the opposite side only in 1622, when it seemed that negotiations would completely break down and that England would have to go to war. In

1

Frederick had married Elizabeth, James' only daughter, in 1612.

1623, however, he was again favoring the match, and at Gondomar's ¹ instigation, he coaxed Charles into travelling with him in person to Madrid, to facilitate, so he hoped, the long awaited triumph of the marriage project. Buckingham by that time had become dedicated to the success of the match, and he also may have hoped that even greater favors would be heaped upon him by a grateful James. James, however, was repelled by the idea of his favorite and heir travelling in secret to Madrid, ² and it was this opposition of James which created the real importance of the journey to Madrid in English history.

Despite James' opposition, Buckingham and Charles managed to bully and cajole the monarch into granting his permission for the journey. But although James gave his consent, he did so with great reluctance, and thus the journey to Madrid became the first major thing that Buckingham did against the monarch's true wishes. Before, he had always been second to the King, and his dreams and actions had been based upon the fact that he owed his entire career to the pleasures of the sovereign. In

1

Don Diego de Sarmiento y Acuna, Spanish ambassador to England, was ennobled in 1618, becoming the Count of Gondomar. He is commonly referred to as Gondomar in texts.

2

Buckingham's plan for the journey, when it was revealed, was for he and Charles to travel incognito through France and thereby keep the journey a secret. James was afraid that their safety would be jeopardized by such a rash undertaking. The romantic aura of the proposition greatly attracted Charles.

1623, however, James had suffered ill health for years and had aged prematurely. He no longer possessed the strength to resist the desires of those dear to him, no matter how much he was opposed to such wishes. The favorite had personally dominated Charles since the two had become friendly in 1618, and in 1623, finding himself able to dominate the weakening James, Buckingham became the virtual ruler of England.

The two did travel to Madrid as planned, but their dreams of bringing a Spanish princess back to England utterly failed. The negotiations in Madrid proved as fruitless as they had been in years gone by, and personal quarrels arose between the two Englishmen and the Spaniards.¹ Buckingham and Charles left Spain late in 1623. Buckingham was furious with the Spaniards and he resolved to start a war between England and Spain: Charles was willing to go along. Here, they again incurred the opposition of James, but, as before, they were able to suppress the sovereign's resistance. In the Parliament of 1624, Buckingham emerged

1

There were two basic problems here. Buckingham's arrogance proved intolerable to the Spaniards, and the two Englishmen did not behave in accordance with Spanish standards of etiquette at Court. In a particularly spectacular episode, Charles climbed a garden wall to visit with the Infanta whom he was to marry and terrified the girl. He aroused great wrath in the Spanish King, because it was customary for an Infanta not to see her prospective spouse before the marriage.

as a popular hero. The majority of Englishmen had favored war with Spain since the time Frederick had been attacked in Bohemia.¹ Buckingham was then at the height of his career.² Charles was agreeing with his every wish, James was unable to assert his opposition, and he had public opinion behind him. Viewed in this light, the achievements Buckingham had made in the period 1614 to 1618 constituted only a beginning. In 1618, when he had asserted his dominance in the administration, far greater things lay ahead of him.

The period 1618 to 1624 saw only two major casualties happen in the ranks of the Buckingham faction. Lord Chancellor Bacon was impeached by the 1621 Parliament, and Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex and Lord Treasurer of England, received a similar fate at the hands of the Parliament of 1624.³ Bacon and Middlesex were replaced by

¹ Their attitudes were manifested in the Parliament of 1621, when the members attacked James' pacific policy.

² The fact that he was created Duke of Buckingham in May, 1623, while still in Madrid, is an important fact to be mentioned here.

³ Although little doubt now exists that Bacon was really innocent, he was successfully impeached for alleged misconduct in office.

Middlesex also was impeached for misconduct, although the real reason for his downfall was his opposition to Buckingham's plans for war against Spain. He believed that such a war would severely weaken the royal finances. Prestwich, X.

John Williams and Richard Weston, respectively, both of whom were clients of the favorite. All other men elevated by Buckingham's influence after the fall of the Howards were retained in favor. However, the years after 1624 saw the dark period of Buckingham's career.

In 1625, James died and Charles succeeded to the throne.¹ To assist in the war against Spain, Buckingham successfully engineered a marriage alliance with France, Spain's traditional enemy on the continent: shortly after his coronation, Charles was married to Henrietta Maria, youngest daughter of Henry IV and sister of Louis XIII. The French, however, demanded generous concessions for the English Catholics, and when the marriage agreement went through, it became as unpopular as the proposed Spanish match had once been. 1625 also saw two disastrous military expeditions against the continental possessions of the Spanish Habsburgs. Ernest von Mansfeld, a German mercenary general in the service of the Elector Frederick, led an expedition into the Netherlands, but not without confiscating much of the funds granted by the 1624 Parliament for such an expedition. The force was badly fed and equipped, and almost perished completely in the winter cold. In the fall, a naval expedition was sent against the Spanish port

¹ The possibility that James was poisoned by Buckingham is an interesting topic here. See Hugh Ross Williamson's biography for a valuable discussion.

of Cádiz.¹ Here, the mismanagement which had slipped into the Admiralty commission since the reforms of 1618 was suddenly revealed. The ships were not in good repair, and conditions for the men were appalling. The expedition was a complete failure.

As the leading figure in the government, Buckingham was blamed for the three events which had occurred in 1625. In 1626, a series of charges were brought against him in the House of Commons.² The Parliament then tried to impeach the Duke, but failed to do so, largely because the charges could not be proven and because the favorite was solidly backed by King Charles. From that point until his murder in 1628, the Duke became the prime target of Parliamentary opposition.

Meanwhile, the French King, Louis XIII, failed to support English military plans against Spain and Buckingham became enraged at Louis.³ Through the course of the year 1626, relations between England and France grew steadily worse, and in 1627, fighting broke out. Buckingham allied himself with the rebellious Huguenots of the French port-city of La Rochelle. In 1627, he personally led an expedition

¹ Buckingham was not the active commander of this expedition. The leadership was entrusted to Sir Edward Cecil, a grand nephew of the great Burleigh.

² The reign of Charles, up to the assassination of Buckingham, saw three Parliaments: 1625, 1626 and 1628.

³ Charles and Buckingham refused to relax the penal laws against the Catholics, as they had been obliged to do in the marriage treaty.

against the French royal forces besieging La Rochelle, but that expedition, partly because of the favorite's¹ bad generalship, became another military disaster. Furthermore, to raise funds for the campaign, Charles had instigated the infamous forced loan of 1627.

In the Parliament of 1628, Buckingham was again attacked, and he unsuccessfully tried to regain some popularity by begging the King to accept the well known Petition² of Right. In the summer of that year, fourteen years after his meeting with James and ten years after he had become established in administrative dominance, opposition to the Duke of Buckingham found an ultimate focal point in the dagger of John Felton, a naval officer who had served at Cadiz and La Rochelle. Felton assassinated Buckingham in August of that year, and brought the spectacular career of the favorite to an end.

The important years of 1614 to 1618, if viewed against the broad context of Buckingham's entire career, suggest

1

Buckingham had received no training or experience as a military commander. This was the major reason for his incompetence at La Rochelle.

2

The Petition tried to eliminate forever the grievances that had occurred in the preceding year: taxations without the consent of Parliaments, forced billeting of troops in the residences of private individuals, no martial law in time of peace, and no imprisonment without a stated cause from the Crown.

that Buckingham's ability to realize his designs was somewhat limited. He did have the abilities, as well as the opportunities, to manage the affairs of the comparatively small sphere of the Court to his advantage. In the bigger world of foreign policy and international relations, however, he fared very badly, for the most part. More important, his later career demonstrates to the observer the extremely great hazards of swimming against the river of public opinion. Buckingham was a clever man, but he was a selfish man who wanted his own way. Outside of his personal triumph over James and his great personal popularity in 1623 and 1624, his only great successes occurred during the years 1614 to 1618, in the world of the Court. Why?

There seems to be only one underlying reason for this observation. The one basic factor behind Buckingham's career was the King: it was James who elevated him and Charles who retained him in power. Also, the Court revolved around the King: it was he who conferred all important offices and titles. Possessing high favor with the King, it proved to be comparatively easy for Buckingham to achieve his desires in the small sphere of the Court. But in the world outside of the Court, the King's jurisdiction did not prevail. James and Charles certainly had not an ounce

of authority over the Courts of Spain and France, and they could not rule public opinion. In this broader sphere, Buckingham, for the most part, was a failure. It may be said that more than anything else, the career of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham reflects upon the first two Stuart kings of England.

WORKS CITED

I. Primary Sources

Balesteros y Bereta, Antonio, ed. Correspondencia Oficial de Don Diego de Sarmiento y Acuna, Conde de Gondomar, II. 4 vols., Madrid, 1947.

Birch, Thomas, ed. The Court and Times of James the First, I and II. 2 vols., London, 1848.

D'Ewes, Sir Simonds. Autobiography of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, ed. J. O. Halliwell. London, 1854.

Fortescue, George M. "The Fortescue Papers", The Camden Society, ed. S. R. Gardiner. London, 1878. (Reprinted, New York, 1965.)

Goodman, Godfrey. The Court of James I, ed. J. S. Brewster, I and II. 2 vols., London, 1839.

Great Britain, Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Acts of the Privy Council of England, XXXVIII. London, 1908-1912. (Reprinted, Washington, D.C., 1963.)

Great Britain, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, XI and XII. Edinburgh, 1877-1898.

Great Britain, Public Record Office. Calendar of State Papers Domestic of the Reign of James I, 1611-1618, 1619-1623. London, 1858.

Great Britain, Public Record Office. Calendar of State Papers Venetian, 1615-1617, 1617-1619. London, 1898.

Halliwell, J. O., ed. Letters of the Kings of England, II. 5 vols., London, 1846.

Nichols, John, ed. The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivals of James I, I to IV. 4 vols., London, 1828.

Spedding, James, ed. The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon, V and VI. 7 vols., London, 1861-1869.

Thompson, Elizabeth M. The Chamberlain Letters. London, 1966.

Weldon, Anthony. "The Secret History of the Court of James the First", The Secret History of the Court of James I, ed. Sir Walter Scott. Edinburgh, 1811.

Whitelocke, James. "Liber Familicus", The Camden Society, ed. John Bruce. London, 1857.

Wilson, Arthur. History of Great Britain, being the Life and Reign of James the First. London, 1653.

Wotton, Sir Henry. Reliquiae Wottonianae. London, 1651.

Wotton, Sir Henry. "A Short View of the Life and Death of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham", The Harleian Miscellany, VIII, ed. W. Oldys. 8 vols., London, 1747.

II. Secondary Sources

A. Books

Aylmer, George E. The King's Servants. London, 1960.

Aylmer, George E. The Struggle for the Constitution, 1603-1689. London, 1965.

Cammell, Charles R. The Great Duke of Buckingham. London, 1939.

Celia, Countess of Denbigh. Royalist Father and Roundhead Son. London, 1906.

Gardiner, Samuel R. History of England, 1603-1642, II. 10 vols., London, 1901-1909.

Gibbs, M. A. Buckingham. London, 1935.

Gibbs, Sir Philip. The Romance of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham and some Men and Woman of the Stuart Court. London, 1908.

Great Britain. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Dictionary of National Biography. London, 1906.

Hill, Christopher. Puritanism and Revolution. London, 1962.

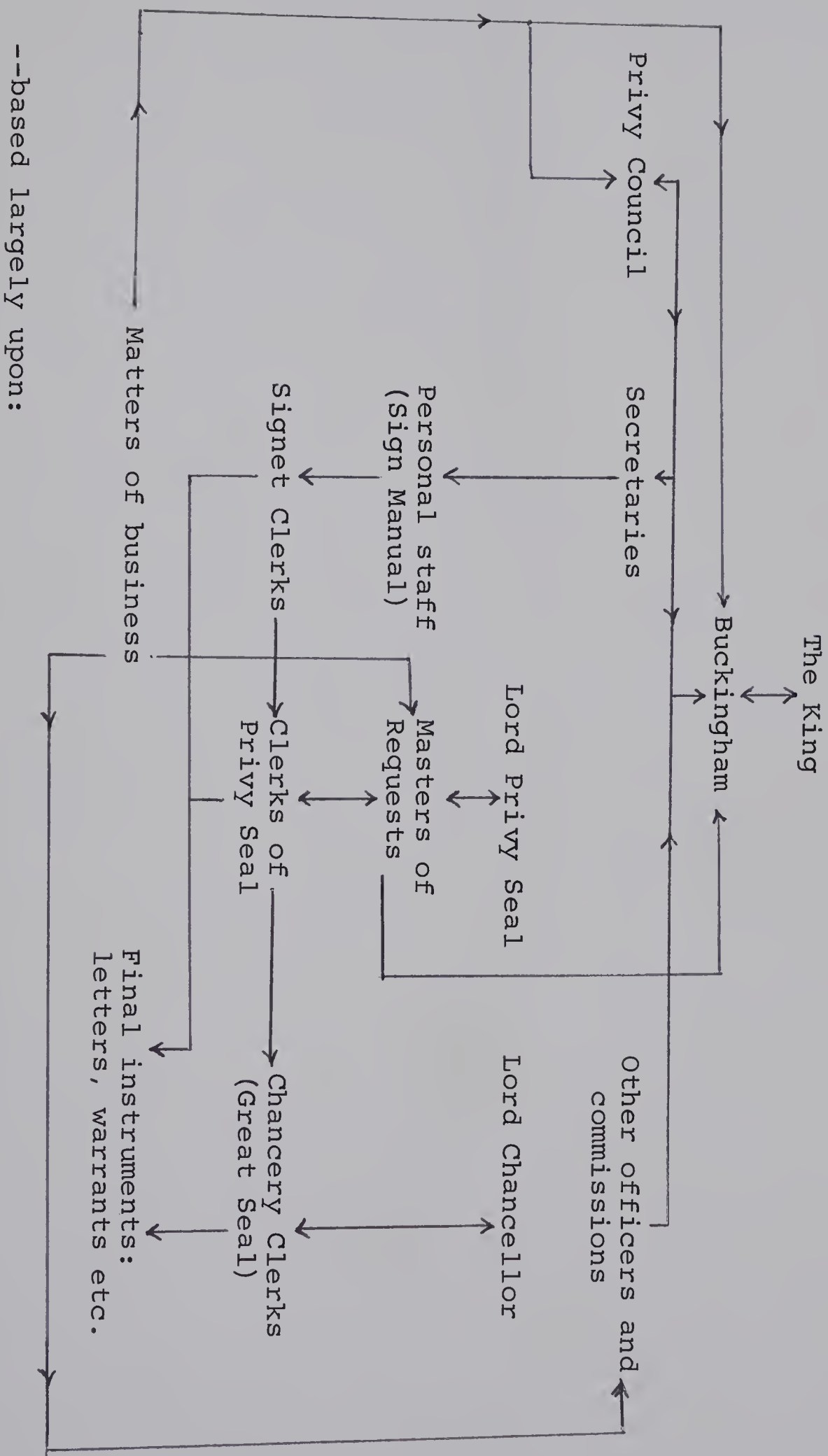
Jones, William J. The Elizabethan Court of Chancery. Oxford, 1967.

- Lamont, William. Marginal Prynne. London, 1963.
- Maxwell-Lyte, Sir Harold C. Historical Notes on the use of the Great Seal of England. London, 1920.
- McElwee, William. The Murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. London, 1952.
- Moir, Thomas L. The Addled Parliament of 1614. Oxford, 1958.
- Oppenheim, Maurice. A History of the Administration of the Royal Navy and of Merchant Shipping in Relation to the Royal Navy, 1547-1660. London. 1961.
- Plumb, J. H. "Political History, 1530-1885", The Victoria County History of Leicestershire, II, ed. W. G. Hoskins. London, 1954.
- Prestwich, Menna. Lionel Cranfield--Profit and Politics under the Early Stuarts. Oxford, 1967.
- Smeeton, George. Historical and Biographical Tracts. London, 1819.
- Tawney, Richard. Business and Politics under James I. London, 1952.
- Thompson, Katherine. The Life and Times of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, I to III. 3 vols., London, 1861.
- Williamson, Hugh Ross. George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham. London, 1941.
- Willson, David H. King James VI and I. London, 1963.
- Wilson, Charles. England's Apprenticeship, 1603-1763. London, 1965.

B. Articles

- Stone, Lawrence. "The Inflation of Honors, 1603-1630", Past and Present (November, 1958),

THE CHANNELS OF THE ADMINISTRATION



--based largely upon:

G. E. Aylmer, The King's Servants, (London, 1960), 14.

B29892